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WASHTENAW JEWISH NEWS

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Exciting new Jewish learning experience comes to Southeast Michigan

Mira Sussman, special to the WJN

Southeast Michigan is about to join a growing roster of communities that can claim to have hosted a local Limmud event. Limmud Michigan comes to the Student Union in Ann Arbor on Sunday, March 13, 10 a.m.–6 p.m.

Limmud, which means "learning" in Hebrew, is an educational experience of presentations, study, performances, shmoozing, and participation aimed at people of all ages, backgrounds and from every level of Jewish knowledge and observance. Started in the early 1980s in England, Limmud has since spread to over 40 countries and over 80 communities worldwide.

Steering Committee: (standing) Davey Rosen and Karla Goldman, both of Ann Arbor; Sue Birnholtz, Sylvan Lake; Dan Horwit, Huntington Woods; and Irv Goldfein, Southfield; (seated) Mira Sussman and Eitan Katz, both of Ann Arbor; Leslie Black and Roger Black, both of Farmington Hills; and Steven Rubenstein, West Bloomfield. Not pictured: Deirsre Hirschtritt and Emily Zussman, both of Ann Arbor, and Rene Lichtman, West Bloomfield

Limmud Michigan's day-long event will feature nationally known teachers, including Rabbi Yaffa Epstein from the Pardes Institute of Jewish Studies, as well as many locally well-known presenters such as Michael Brooks, former director of the University of Michigan Hillel; Jeff Bernstein, professor of political science at Eastern Michigan University; Rabbi Alana Alpert of Congregation T'chiyah in Oak Park/community organizer with Detroit Jews for Justice, as well as visiting rabbi with the Reconstructionist Congregation of Ann Arbor; Zvi Gittelman, professor of political science and Jewish studies at the University of Michigan; and Howard Lupovich, director of the Cohn-Haddow Center for Judaic Studies at Wayne State University.

Each Limmud community shares the philosophy and values of excitement for innovative Jewish learning, volunteerism, respect for diversity, "learning for the sake of heaven," and fostering connections. Each Limmud features multiple sessions that run simultaneously, covering topics such as social justice, the arts, text study, literature, community, and Israel, boasting "something for everyone."

Karla Goldman, director of the Jewish Communal Leadership Program at the University of Michigan School of Social Work and member of the Limmud Michigan Steering Committee wants to ensure that participants of all ages will find something that appeals to them. Students in the Jewish Communal Leadership Program are overseeing a social justice track of sessions that include topics such as Jewish/Muslim dialogue, Social Justice in Detroit, Solidarity in the Jewish Community, and LGBT in the Jewish Community. "Limmud offers a fantastic opportunity to bring together the resources of our local communities, the University of Michigan, and visiting scholars and activists to create a day of Jewish learning that Michigan Union has never seen before," says Goldman. "I look forward to the chance to learn with folks from all over Southeastern Michigan."

Davey Rosen, associate director of Hillel at the University of Michigan, is one of Limmud Michigan's co-chairs. "I found out about creating a Limmud Michigan from my friend Sue Birnholtz [of Sylvan Lake], who has been to several Limmuds (in other cities across the U.S.). She was so excited about bringing Limmud to Southeast Michigan because of the opportunity for our community to explore the diversity of Jewishness." Rosen adds, "For Limmud Michigan to really represent the area, we needed to bring together people from Ann Arbor, Detroit and the Detroit suburbs on the steering committee. In particular I'm excited about the opportunity for U of M students to be a part of this multi-generational experience."

For more information and to register to participate and volunteer, go to Limmud-michigan.org. ■

Chabad celebrates 40 years of serving Jewish Ann Arbor

Chana Sara Elias, special to the WJN

Chabad will celebrate 40 years of service to the Ann Arbor community during an evening of dinner and inspiration on Sunday, March 13, at Palmer Commons in the University of Michigan Life Sciences Complex. This has only been made possible by a newlywed couple that arrived in Ann Arbor in 1975 to open a Chabad House. When Rabbi Aharon and Esther Goldstein arrived in Ann Arbor, they were unsure as to what to expect, however one thing was for sure—they wanted to serve the Jewish community as best they could and this remains their mission today.

The Goldstein's, both of whom hailed from Brooklyn, New York, worked with college students back in Brooklyn. They said they felt "lucky and fortunate" to be chosen to go on this lifetime mission and that they chose Ann Arbor for the comfort they felt working with college students.

Ann Arbor says hello and goodbye to many families each year, many of whom are only here temporarily for a spouse's residency or Ph.D. commitment. Chabad welcomes these families and offers them a sense of community.

"We lived in a town with no family and especially around holidays, when Alan couldn't get off, [Chabad] became like a second family for us to get to celebrate with people who were warm and friendly with open doors," said Alyssa Daskal, now of Phoenix, Arizona.

The Daskals moved to Ann Arbor with their three-year-old son Alex for her husband Alan to complete residency at U-M. They lived in Ann Arbor for three years until Alan got a job post-residency in Phoenix.

"It is hard to lose our cherished members when they move away for a job after residency,"

Esther Goldstein learning with her student at CHS

said Esther Goldstein. "However, we're also excited because we know other wonderful families will move here and we will be able to get to know them over the next few years."

There are also many long-term community members who have raised their families here and the next generation continues on in Ann Arbor as well. Chabad serves all of the families, regardless of their estimated length of stay.

Continued on page 2

Greater Ann Arbor Jewish community oral history website ready for visitors

Elliot Sorkin, special to the WJN

Beth Israel Congregation was the recipient of two generous Jewish Community Impact Fund grants from the Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor. Members of the greater Ann Arbor Jewish community were interviewed and recorded to create a new website containing clips of those interviews and other historic information and photos showcasing the history of the community. Nationally known StoryCorps facilitated the interviews organized by members of Beth Israel. Cornershop Creative created the website. In addition, recordings of the interviews were provided to the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress, and locally to the University of Michigan's Bentley Historical Library where the complete interviews may be heard and full transcriptions are available.

Continued on page 2

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Community

Chabad celebrates 40 years, continued from page 1

Chabad offers many programs, including the renowned Rohr Jewish Learning Institute (JLI) courses. According to the JLI website, the mission is "to make Jewish learning accessible and personally meaningful to every Jew, regardless of background or affiliation." Courses are offered several times throughout the year, broaching topics such as Jewish mysticism, history, ethics and beliefs.

Each Jewish holiday brings another event, such as Soup in the Sukkah for women on Sukkos, a family Purim carnival and an ice cream party for Shavuot. This year Chabad held a public menorah lighting – complete with a fire show—at Liberty Plaza, the first time there was a public lighting since 1976.

"Our favorite event was the Purim carnival. Every year it was no question as to what we were doing for our Purim meal," said Daskal. "It was smooth and flawless, so easy to just show up. There was always plenty of food, amazing activities to do and always lots of *ruach* (spirit)."

Youth programming

Children are the focus of the future – they will be the leaders of the world. Therefore Chabad makes youth programming a priority with many programs geared toward the future leaders. These programs include preschool-aged Jewish enrichment, Camp Gan Israel summer camp and Hebrew school. The Goldstein's eldest daughter, Shternie Zwiebel, and her husband, Rabbi Zalman, have taken the lead of youth programming.

Gan Yeladim provides three- and four-year-olds the opportunity to learn about Judaism with hands-on activities, songs and fun. The small group size allows individual attention to each student and helps to create a compassionate learning environment.

"We wanted to enrich his Jewish learning, and also we knew Shternie and Esther personally and knew they would be fantastic teachers and fantastic role models," said Daskal who sent her son to Gan Yeladim for one year. "Mondays were his favorite day of the week."

In 2014, Chabad opened a larger, improved Hebrew school on Sunday mornings at Chabad House. They use many hands-on techniques in addition to CapIt!, a fast-track Hebrew reading program. Zwiebel opened the Hebrew school to give a "camp-like feel all year round."

"The students are excited about the Jewish holidays and have so much spirit with our Jewish holiday fairs, including the shofar and matzah factory," said Zwiebel.

The Hebrew school unites camp friends that go to different schools while also teaching them basic Hebrew reading skills and about Jewish tradition and pride.

Chabad on campus

Every Friday night a student Shabbat dinner is held at Chabad House, in addition to the many student holiday meals, and all meals are held free of charge thanks to the generous donors of Chabad. Other programs that are offered include kosher cooking classes, one-on-one learning sessions, Sinai Scholars, yearly trips to Israel and alternative spring breaks. Each night of the week brings a different class, a different topic and lively bunch of students ready to be inspired.

In 1975, Chabad's focus was students and getting on campus to speak to them. Now, in 2016, the Goldstein's eldest son, Rabbi Alter, and his wife, Chanchi, continue this effort in a very similar way with the added benefit of modern technology. Social media is implemented to invite students to events, in addition to text and email to check in with their students.

"No matter how busy I am, when a student comes knocking at my door, I love taking that opportunity for inspiration," said Chanchi.

Chabad holds exciting events on and off campus, including the public menorah lighting in the Diag for Chanukah. They also create a Jewish presence in their students' sororities and fraternities. Whether a student comes to an event, needs a smile or a bowl of chicken soup when they're sick, Chabad is always there; they are the Jewish students' home away from home. Chabad of Ann Arbor, like all other international Chabad Houses, are completely supported by individual donors. They rely on the support of those in the community, past and present, as well as U-M alumni, to be able to keep serving the local community.

One campaign that Chabad recently undertook was that of renovating their mikvah to support the Jewish family. "With the new renovations, we can now keep this mitzvah in spa-like conditions," said Esther Goldstein.

While the decades have gone by since the Goldsteins arrived on the front door step of Ann Arbor, the message remains the same, to love your fellow Jew. And this is the reason why the Goldsteins have stayed in Ann Arbor—to continue to carry the message to everyone they meet.

"We love Ann Arbor because we love meeting people, everyone has a unique story to tell."

Join Chabad at their celebration dinner on Sunday, March 13. To register for the event, visit www.jewmich.com. ■

Oral history website, continued from page 1

Though the project was always conceived to be a history of the entire Ann Arbor Jewish community, Beth Israel Congregation had an immensely seminal influence. In time for the congregation's yearlong 100th anniversary celebration, the website is now live and may be found at http://annarborjewishstories.org. In the future it is hoped that further contributions will be made to the website with pictures of each congregation and Jewish organizations found in greater Ann Arbor along with additional oral interviews.

Seventeen interviews relevant to the history of the community were recorded: Helen and David Aminoff; Harlene and Henry Appelman; Jeffrey Bernstein and Caroline Helton; Michael Brooks and Carol Amster; Bob Faber and Abe Ingber z'l; Sheila Feigelson and Ruth Siegel; Beverly Gershowitz and Arthur Gershowitz; Zvi Gittelman and Marlene Gitelman; Daryl M. Hafter and Monroe I. Hafter and Robert A. Green z'l; Eileen D. Hymans and Saul H. Hymans; Jim Keen and Bonnie Keen; Diana Khiterer and Angela Kesselman; Barry Margolis and Judith Lax; Betsy Yvonne Mark and Malvern Reinhart; Charles Newman and Sharon Newman; Ronald Sussman, Elana Sussman and Mira Sussman; and Israel Woronoff z'l and Marilyn Gallatin.

The job of making sure everything that appears on the website is historically correct, and that the website itself accurately reflects that history fell to the Oral History Website Committee. Its members included: Chairman Steve Leber, Laura Hirshbein, Carol Finerman, Edward D'Angelo, Michele Leshan, Judith Endelman. Jake Kander, Elliot Sorkin, Beth Dwoskin, Cindy Saper, and Rabbi Robert Dobrusin. ■

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Extra copies of the *Washtenaw Jewish News* are available at locations throughout Washtenaw County.

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Talk will explore how the Soviet Jewry movement became sacred

Yaffa Klugerman, special to the WJN

It was the era of Solidarity Sundays, Freedom Seders, and bar mitzvah twinning with Soviet youth. It was the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s, when the entire Jewish community seemed united in its efforts to free Soviet Jews, and political activism became a sacred cause.

Shaul Kelner

"Social movements engage people by making them feel part of something deeply significant," explained Shaul Kelner, a fellow at the Frankel Institute for Advanced Judaic Studies at the University of Michigan. "The Soviet Jewry movement did this, both as a Jewish movement that looked to the Exodus story as a core part of Jewish identity, and as an American movement that gave people a way, at the height of the Cold War, to feel like they were making a difference in fighting for freedom."

Kelner will be speaking on "The Timeless and the Timely: Sacralizing Political Activism in the Campaign for Soviet Jewry." The lecture will take place on February 25, at 12:15 p.m. at 202 South Thayer Street, room 2022, and is free and open to the public. His talk is one of many educational events being offered by the Frankel Institute this year that focuses on the 2015–16 theme of "Secularization/Sacralization."

Kelner is associate professor of sociology and Jewish Studies at Vanderbilt University, and past director of VU's Jewish Studies Program. An alumnus of the Wexner Graduate Fellowship, he is the author of the award-winning *Tours That Bind: Diaspora, Pilgrimage and Israeli Birthright Tourism*. He is currently writing a book on the culture of the American Soviet Jewry movement.

He explained that there are many examples of how the Soviet Jewry movement became a sacred cause. "For years, a group called the Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry would hold a 'Freedom Seder' outside of Soviet diplomatic offices in New York, protesting the oppression of Soviet Jews," Kelner said. "In the early 1980s, when the Soviets had clamped down on Jews trying to emigrate and reduced the number of exit visas to a mere few hundred, someone asked the head of SSSJ, Rabbi Avi Weiss, why he kept on coming out to protest since clearly it wasn't working. He responded, `How can you not come out to protest? How can you celebrate Passover, the festival of freedom, without demanding freedom for Soviet Jews?'

"Activists did not just say that cause was sacred. That would have been just talk. They made the cause sacred by treating it as sacred, and one of the main ways they treated it as sacred was to make new Jewish rituals around it."

Kelner was drawn to his research two decades ago when he took a graduate school course on religious protest movements.

"Delving into the Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry archives was fascinating," he recalled. "It was the first time I had worked with archival materials, and I was amazed at how the old documents just sprang to life. I love studying social movements because it immerses me in the lives of people who have a passion to change the world."

Are there similar sacred causes today that stir up similar feelings in the Jewish community?

"One of the things that made the Soviet Jewry movement so resonant was that it was tied to the most important issue of its era; namely, the Cold War," Kelner remarked. "I think if the Jewish environmental movement was to look to the Soviet Jewry movement's playbook, it has the potential to emerge as an important force on the American Jewish scene." ■

March concert features violin and piano

Karen Freedland, special to the WJN

The Jewish Cultural Arts and Education department of the Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor will host a brunch and musical performance on Sunday, March 20, at 11 a.m., featuring violinist Dr. Maria Bessmeltseva and pianist Michele Cooker. They will present a classical program which will include music by a Jewish composer. Their past performances at the JCC have been very well received, leading to this upcoming performance.

Dr. Bessmeltseva is a Russian-born violinist who, from an early age, has performed in concert venues in Russia, Poland, Lithuania, Italy, and the United States. Dr. Bessmeltseva's solo career has taken her from the celebrated stages of the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. and Carnegie Hall in New York City, to the Glinka Philharmonic Chamber Hall and St. Petersburg State Capella in St. Petersburg, Russia. In addition to her live performances, Dr. Bessmeltseva has also appeared on local television and radio stations in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan; Rutland, Vermont; and South Hadley, Massachusetts.

Michele Cooker is a concert pianist and private piano instructor in Ann Arbor. She also collaborates with members of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra and numerous violinists through the Midwest. Cooker has performed in concert series and festivals in the United States, Canada, and Mexico. She has appeared on television through Public Broadcasting Service programs as well as several programs broadcast live for WFMT radio in Chicago and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation in Canada.

Brunch will include a traditional selection of bagels, salad, cheese, fruit and dessert. The cost for this event is $5 per person. While payment can be made at the door, advanced RSVP's are requested to ensure appropriate quantities of food, by calling 971-0990 or email karenfreedland@jccfed.org. ■

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Ann Arbor's Realtor of the Year

JFS' ElderLink seeks musically talented volunteers

Sarah Okin, special to the WJN

For many years, the Jewish community in greater Ann Arbor has been pondering whether a retirement facility geared toward Jewish older adults in Washtenaw County would be a good investment. While we continue deliberating, many Jewish older adults continue to need to select a facility or home care agency. These older adults in the past have been faced with a void of options if they want their religious and cultural needs met. As a reaction to this, JFS developed the ElderLink program in 2007. ElderLink offers cultural training, education and programming for organizations that serve Jewish older adults. ElderLink Partners, such as Homewatch Caregivers of Ann Arbor, Atria Senior Living, Arbor Hospice, Brookdale Place, Clare Bridge and University Living have all benefited from this innovative program over the years.

In ElderLink, JFS provides training for the staff of facilities and home care agencies in the area of cultural sensitivity—with special focus on Jewish culture. This education enables caregivers to provide culturally conscientious care to their residents and clients, resulting in higher levels of satisfaction and better quality of life. JFS staff members also facilitate Jewish holiday celebrations at residential facilities to ensure their residents' Jewish cultural and spiritual needs are met more thoroughly, while at the same time exposing non-Jewish neighbors to these important traditions.

The Herb Amster Center became involved with ElderLink in 2012 and in just two years, revitalized the program by contracting with six ElderLink partner facilities. The Center's mission is to generate revenue to support the important work of JFS, therefore reducing the agency's dependence on grant and foundation funding. The Center has had a greater positive impact on JFS' bottom line thanks to the revenue generated by ElderLink. The Center is the legacy of Herb Amster, a long-time JFS Board member and finance committee member, generous mentor to JFS and local entrepreneur.

Since the ElderLink program has grown in popularity, JFS now seeks musically talented community members interested in performing for these older adult 'party goers'. ElderLink Partner facilities' residents are highly entertained by singers, musicians and performance groups and JFS is always grateful to rely upon the talent of our community to help us enhance the lives of older adults. Holiday programming —such as parties for Purim, Chanukah and Rosh Hashannah—are greatly enhanced by musical performances. Passover seder is another event that JFS hosts at ElderLink Partner sites and this holiday celebration truly isn't complete without the presence of festive singing. Past JFS events have included the University of Michigan's Jewish Acapella group Kol Ha Kavod, U-M Hillel's Music Verse and various community members.

JFS also continues to seek volunteers for its popular medical appointment accompaniment program, Partners in Care Concierge, as well as volunteers for its Friendly Visitors program.

To lend your time and support the important work of JFS, contact Leah Zaas, volunteer coordinator at leahz@jfsannarbor.org. ■

Why do Jews say mazel tov and l'chaim?

Moshe Dimroff, special to the WJN

The Rohr Jewish Learning Institute (JLI) will present "The Jewish Course of Why," the institute's new six-session winter 2016 course. Classes will be taught on Tuesdays, beginning February 16.

Rabbi Aharon of Chabad Ann Arbor, will teach the six course sessions at 9:30 a.m., and 7:30 p.m. at the Chabad House and Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor.

"No religion is known for its rational basis and its welcoming of questions and intellectual debate quite like Judaism," explained Rabbi Zalman Abraham of JLI's headquarters in Brooklyn.

"In preparing for the course, we turned to over 30,000 people who each submitted their biggest questions about Judaism. We then selected the most popular among them and addressed each one with resonant insights from the greatest minds in Jewish history."

"The Jewish Course of Why" spans a diverse range of topics, from fun, light, and off-the-beaten-track questions, to more complex and controversial issues. Some of the course's 50 questions include: Why are there so many Jews in Hollywood? Why do Jews eat gefilte fish and cholent and wish each other mazal tov and l'chaim? Why does the Bible sanctions slavery and animal sacrifices? What is the cause of antisemitism? What does Judaism say about Christianity and about the role of women in Jewish life? In addition to the above, the course offers insight into mysterious Jewish practices, strange biblical narratives, and enigmas of Jewish identity.

"We're excited to be offering this fun and dynamic learning experience here in Ann Arbor," said Rabbi Goldstein. "'The Jewish Course of Why' gives our participants the opportunity to expand their Jewish knowledge and intellectualize their Judaism by exploring rational insights into the most intriguing questions that Jews have today."

Like all previous JLI programs, The Jewish Course of Why is designed to appeal to people at all levels of Jewish knowledge, including those without any prior experience or background in Jewish learning. All JLI courses are open to the public, and attendees need not be affiliated with a particular synagogue, temple, or other house of worship.

Interested students may call 995-3276 x 2 or visit www.myJLI.com for registration and other course-related information. ■

Jewish Learning Institute Class

Jewish comic guys topic of JCC classes

Karen Freedland, special to the WJN

On February 25, the Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor and the Jewish Cultural Society of Ann Arbor will sponsor Larry Kuperman's presentation on The Jewish Comic Book Guys. Beginning with refreshments at 6:30 p.m., the presentation will run from 7–8 p.m. with questions and answers afterwards.

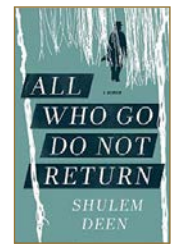
Some of the topics include: Superman—The first Jewish Comic Book Hero; Captain America—How Joe Simon and Jack Kirby Created America's Hero; The Publishers—How Harry Wildenberg, Max Ginzberg, Harry Donenfield and Martin "Moe" Goodman Created DC, Marvel and an Industry, and how Will Eisner influenced a generation of artists and established the graphic novel as part of Jewish culture. A donation of $5 per person is requested. To RSVP or if you have any questions, contact Karen Freedland at karenfreedland@jccannarbor.org.

Jewish Cultural Society resumes book club

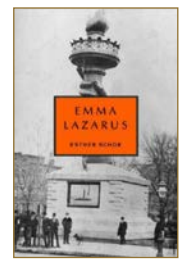
Ruth P. Freedman, special to the WJN

After a hiatus of several years, The Ann Arbor Jewish Cultural Society (JCS) book club has resumed this year. Long time JCS member Jan Price has taken the lead on convening the resumption of this active and engaging group. Book selections with a direct or peripheral Jewish theme are chosen and the discussions reflect a Jewish lens through which the book is discussed. The group has chosen selections for each month, January through May of this year. When additional books are selected, with suggestions from those attending the Book Club meetings, the list will be updated. The group meets on selected Sundays from noon until 2 p.m. in the Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor. All members of the Ann Arbor community are welcome and encouraged to join in stimulating, interesting, informative and reflective discussions of the selection of the month. The selected books and the dates on which they will be discussed are as follows:

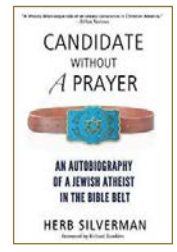
- Sunday, January 24, *All Who Go Don't Return*, by Shulem Deen. A moving and revealing exploration of Hasidic life, and one man's struggles with faith, family, and community



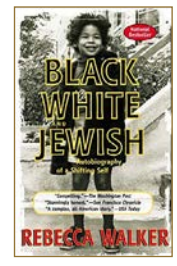
- Sunday, February 21, *Emma Lazarus*, by Esther Schor. Emma Lazarus's most famous poem gave a voice to the Statue of Liberty, but her remarkable life has remained a mystery until now. She was a woman so far ahead of her time that we are still scrambling to catch up with her—a feminist, a Zionist, and an internationally famous Jewish American writer before these categories even existed.



- Sunday, March 27, *Candidate Without a Prayer: Autobiography of a Jewish Atheist in the Bible Belt*, by Herb Silverman. A deeply revealing and engaging autobiography, Herb Silverman tells his iconoclastic life story.



- Sunday, April 17, *Black, White and Jewish: Autobiography of a Shifting Self,* by Rebecca Walker. Rebecca Walker, daughter of writer Alice Walker and Jewish lawyer Mel Leventhal, writes that her confusion about being biracial began when her parents divorced when she was 8 years old.



- Sunday, May 22, *The Nazi Officer's Wife: How One Jewish Woman Survived the Holocaust*, by Edith H. Beer and Susan Dworkin. Questions of identity—and the continual submersion of self to stay alive—are the heart of the story.

Register Now for a Fun Family Event!

Sunday March 6, 2016 • 2:00-5:00 p.m. - Ann Arbor City Club

KIDS CARE FAIR

Activity Partners include Alpha House, American Red Cross, Ann Arbor Police Department, Ann Arbor Symphony, Beth Israel Congregation Madrichim, Elameno-Peace, First Congregational Church of Ann Arbor Youth Group, Greenhills Service Ninjas, Gym America, Hebrew Day School, JCC Camp Raanana, Jewish Federation Family Salon, Temple Beth Emeth-AARTY and more!

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- Cultural Sensitivity & Disability Awareness Activities
- Family Zumba
- Emergency Preparedness
- Magic Show by A2 Magic
- Musical Instrument Petting Zoo
- Book Nook and Storytime
- Teddy Bear Triage
- Activities Focusing on Hunger Prevention & Food Insecurity
- Food Pantry Scavenger Hunt
- Gymnastics and Tumbling
- Snacks and Light Refreshments
- Raffle for Fabulous Prizes
- Crafts Benefitting Older Adults & Homeless Children & Families

Tickets:

- "Family ticket"– $25/family
- "Host Family ticket"– $50 (covers entry for your family PLUS sponsors another family to attend at no charge, includes custom Kids Care Fair gifts)
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Sunday, April 17, 2016 3:00 p.m.- 5:00p.m.

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Guest Editorial

Remember when?

by David Shtulman

Do you remember when you could go to the airport and proceed directly to the gate without long security lines and the need to get half undressed? Do you remember when you could greet your guests without having to wait at a cell phone lot?

David Shtulman

Do you remember when you could go to a baseball game or a football game without long lines to check your bags?

Do you remember when nobody thought of armed guards in Jewish schools or JCCs or at synagogues on the high holidays?

Do you remember when discussions of immigration did not center on possible terrorism and national security?

Do you remember when Presidential candidates spoke about what they will do to make our country better instead of what they will undo; when they gave you reasons to vote for them instead of against the others?

The attacks of September 11 happened only 15 years ago and while the immediate shock has passed, the impact on our country has been profound. We now take for granted things that would have been unimaginable only 20 years ago. The world, never a peaceful place, is roiled by religious and ethnic warfare that threatens everyone everywhere and nobody seems to have any solutions. Indeed, solutions depend on differing parties being able to identify a common goal they can work towards, but the world seems to be increasingly defined by our differences rather than our commonalities.

Even in public discourse we seem to be seeking to emphasize discord and opposition as opposed to understanding. What were once called differences of opinion now have a new name, micro-aggression. I wonder how micro a micro-aggression has to be before it is so no longer considered aggressive. (By the way, I would like to apologize now to anyone who feels aggrieved by my characterization of micro-aggressions and also express that I find your feelings to be an aggression against my freedom of speech.)

It is difficult to work towards a more peaceful and unified society at home when we are so quick to be insulted by the opinions of others and how do we restore calm to a world in which insults (real or perceived) are met with violence and murder and terror?

I remember when I didn't need to know the names and contact information of the local police, sheriff and FBI. I remember when I didn't have to attend regular workplace security meetings and I remember when we didn't receive daily security updates. What is more disturbing to me than this new reality is how quickly we have accepted it as normal.

I don't know how we address these issues as a society. The only thing I have control over is my own behavior. I can strive to be the most open, rational and good person I can be; to listen to all sides and then make what I believe is the best decision, recognizing that people who reach other decisions are no less good or rational than me. Perhaps, if each of us takes that challenge on individually we can make a good first step. After all, society is nothing more than a collection of individuals. ■

Women

Hands-on healthy food choices is topic of Jewish Women's Circle February gathering

Mae E. Sander, special to the WJN

Are you thinking about transitioning to a healthier diet? What are your goals? Maybe you'd like to lower your cholesterol? Increase your energy? Improve your digestion? Lose a few pounds? If you're ready to develop new, healthy habits, but don't know where to begin, or just need a little help, I completely understand," so writes Vicki Brett-Gach, a Vegan Lifestyle Coach, Educator, and Certified Personal Chef. She will present her insights and cooking tips at the Jewish Women's Circle meeting on February 3, at 7:30 p.m., at the home of Esther Goldstein. A $10 donation is requested.

Ann Arbor resident Brett Gach specializes in heart-healthy whole-foods plant-based cooking classes and workshops, and offers recipes and overall wellness advice through her website (Ann Arbor Vegan Kitchen http://annarborvegankitchen.com/), private sessions, and presentations like this one. Her website has recently featured recipes such as "Veggie Medley Marinara over Red Wine Pasta" and "Baked Potato, Sweet Potato, and Zucchini Latkes."

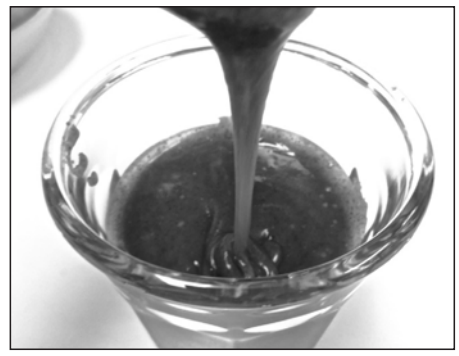


PHOTO CREDIT: ANN ARBOR VEGAN KITCHEN

Easy Vegan Caramel Sauce

"Everyone can learn from Vicki," says Esther Goldstein, leader of the Jewish Women's Circle. Whatever your own food preferences, Brett-Gach's health-based approach can give you some good ideas to add flavorful, vegetable-based recipes to your repertoire as well as tips for improving your habits.

"We celebrated the holiday of Tu B'shevat, our New Year for the trees, on January 25. So this is a traditional time of year to think about preparing and eating fruits and vegetables," she says.

All Jewish Women's Circle (JWC) meetings foster comradeship through making new friends, socializing, and learning about a variety of issues. The JWC is open to all, no affiliation necessary. Email esther@jewmich.com or respond to the E-Vite for the event to reserve a place at this meeting. To receive future invitations from the JWC, send email or join the JWC Facebook group. ■

Tea and Torah

by Rochel Urist

Every Tuesday night, a group of women, myself included, gather for "Tea and Torah" learning sessions at the home of Esther Goldstein, wife of Chabad's Rabbi Aharon Goldstein. We read a portion of the week's Torah portion, and we drink tea. We learn in the time-honored fashion: first we read the verse (the pasook), translate, read the commentary, then discuss. The women around the table, numbering anywhere from three to twelve, come with vastly different backgrounds. Some don't read Hebrew. Others had rigorous Jewish training. There may be seekers searching for their roots. Some plan to convert. Everyone comes to enjoy the warmth of this female community in the warmth of the Goldstein home

Tea and Torah was born of a mothers group that began forty years ago, when Esther's first child was several months old. (She was six months pregnant when she and her husband arrived in Ann Arbor.) She arranged to meet with several other new moms and their babies. We met at different homes. Mothers sat in a circle on the floor with the babes crawling, sprawling or bawling in the middle. While monitoring our kids, we learned Torah.

That original group lasted about a year. Ten years later, Esther again invited women to join her to learn Torah. This time, it was sans children. On Tuesday evenings we sit at her dining room table and drink tea as we read and discuss the allotted portion. The first year, we read the first aliyah—that is, the first section of Torah read during the Shabbat morning service. Each successive year, we cycle through the next aliyot, until we complete all seven. When the cycle is complete, we begin again at the first aliyah.

Lonnie Sussman, a bastion of Ann Arbor's Conservative Jewish community, is the most regular and loyal member of the group. She estimates that she's been coming for 25 years. She sums things up this way:

Tuesday evenings are special. I've made new friendships. Many moved out of this community, but we stay in touch. We share stories about our families and life's joys and challenges. Tuesdays at Esther's offer time and space for intellectual and spiritual struggles. It's great to learn traditional understandings of the text. It's also great to bring our own understandings and interpretations. There are no judgements and no wrong answers.

It's a quiet time to delve into the vast ocean of Torah and see how it impacts our lives no matter what our background is. It's a time to laugh, to think, and to feel the strong bond of community.

Over the years, Lonnie has initiated some of the group's traditions. She introduced the practice of acknowledging original interpretations around the table using the learner's initials, a nod to the revered sages, e.g., Rashi and Rambam, who were known by their acronyms. "Rashi" (for Rabbi Shlomo Yitzchaki), is composed of three initials: Resh, Shin, Yud. "Rambam" (for Rabbi Moshe ben Maimon), is an amalgam of Resh, Mem, Bet, Mem. In our circle, Esther (EG) is "Egg;" Lonnie (LS) is "Lis;" I (RU) am "Roo." When we delve into the Torah's word choice or syntax, when we embroider stories in the manner of midrashim, we are congratulated and acknowledged by our acronyms and their historical context.

The women who have participated in Tea and Torah represent a cross-section of the population. There have been professionals of all stripes along with women of simpler ambitions who simply want to learn. Among the brainiacs who have graced our circle were two young prodigies, a Brit and a Sabra. Ruth matriculated at Oxford at age 12, earned university degrees in math then physics by age 17, and taught at Harvard and U of M by the time she was 22. Today she is a tenured professor at Hebrew University and the Orthodox mother of five. The other celebrity, Sharon (shah-ROHN), or "Sas" (SS), was a legal scholar who followed a similar path. After finishing her Ph.D. in law at Hebrew University, she had a year's fellowship at Harvard, then at U of M, then at Oxford. Today she, too, is a professor at Hebrew University, and she, too, is Orthodox. Their commitment to Torah study was fortified by the example and hospitality extended by our host and teacher, Esther. It is notable that Esther Goldstein is never intimidated. Nor is she intimidating. Every woman who comes to learn is treated as a fellow Jew, a prospective friend, and an equal member of the tribe of learners. Note, too, that we never "study." We "learn."

Sharon ("Sas") sent the following testimony:

> *Tea and Torah was a wonderful opportunity to make friends. It offered a feeling of community and belonging. It inspired me intellectually, since it offered new perspectives on materials I was previously familiar with. It was, all in all, great fun. I found the setting in which every participant is both a learner and a teacher to be interesting, engaging, respectful and meaningful. I still consider my co-learners in Tea and Torah to be dear friends, and still draw on things we've discussed and learned within the group.*

Other attendees echo the themes of community, friendship, the level of discussion, Esther's breadth of knowledge, and the warmth of the atmosphere. One is thrilled that she can now discuss Torah with her knowledgeable Jewish sons. Some expressed frustration with scheduling conflicts that prevented their regular attendance.

Everyone is welcome. The group meets Tuesdays from 8-9 p.m. For more information, contact Esther at esther@jewmich.com ■

Logic and faith

Rabbi Aharon Goldstein, special to the WJN

Last Shabbat (January 30, Torah portion of Yisro) we read that God was revealed through much thunder and lightning as the Torah was given to the Jewish people. This week (February 6, Torah portion Mishpatim) we ask, what is it about this Torah that required all the might and awe and profound visceral reaction in its revelation and yet the name of the portion describing the event is somewhat dry and clinical—Mishpatim—laws / statutes?

In the Torah there are three general types of mitzvot (commandments).

1) Chukot (Beyond Understanding)—A commandment beyond human understanding, the reason for which God has not yet revealed.

2) Eidut (Giving Testimony)—If God had not commanded them to us we would not have thought of doing them on our own. However, their nature is such that we can understand their reasons. For example: Shabbat, Matzoh on Passover, etc.

3) Mishpatim (statutes)—The reasons for these are easily understood. Even if they weren't commanded to us, we could have thought of doing them on our own. For example: not stealing, not murdering, etc.

So the portion we read just after the giving of the Torah is called " and these are the laws and statutes." To which laws are they referring? The laws that human logic would have figured out anyway. If you look through the portion, you see that the majority of the commandments that are discussed are laws between humans—things that are fully understood within human nature.

Therefore, we have a great question: Why, just after its giving, did the Torah find it important to discuss the simplest, most easily understood laws? We could have come up with these laws on our own. So why do we have the whole awe—inspiring tumult of the giving of the Torah just to give some laws that we would probably have come up with on our own anyway? The answer to the question is that the Torah is trying to teach us something particular—the manner in which we should relate to laws that are logical and otherwise easily within the realm of human understanding.

Rabbi Aharon Goldstein

If anything, because these laws are so logical and accessible a person might say that one does not even have to believe in God to incorporate them into their life, e.g. thou shall not steal, thou shall not murder, etc. These are laws that are understood on their own merit as necessary for an orderly, civilized society and we don't need God to tell us these types of laws.

The lesson that the Torah wants to teach us by putting the simple laws immediately after the awesome experience at Sinai is that even when we perform these fully logical and understandable mitzvot, we have to do them with the intention of expressing our faith in God. We don't do these mitzvot because our intellect tells us to do so, but because God tells us to. That's why these simple laws are highlighted immediately after the awe and grandeur of Sinai, so that they will be associated closely with God's revelation.

Another question arises as to why the observance of these simple laws is importantly connected to following God's will rather than merely saying that they make logical sense. The answer is that one cannot base their life principles on logic alone. Even with all of the great qualities of logical thinking, it's not a good foundational basis upon which to live life properly. This is due to the fact that the intellect is subject to the will of the individual. If a person desires to do something that might be in conflict with their intellectual principles, it is all too easy to manufacture a justification to allay the conflict. As an example let's look at stealing or hurting another person. If one is basing a decision on logic alone, one can say in a given situation not only are we allowed to hurt someone else but also it can even be derived that we must hurt another—even that it be considered a Mitzvah to hurt someone else. Intellect has this ability to prove a point from different and even opposite perspectives depending upon the assumptions from which the logic derives. The intellect does not have the ability to be the sole guidance in helping a person decide how to live a proper life. We find that in situations where we are able to manipulate the logic of the law to serve our improper desire, if we stay with the principle that we are doing it because God told us to do it, we will stay on the proper path.

If a person does a mitzvah only because it makes logical sense, they are missing out on the depth and breadth of the powers of the mitzvah that are beyond the limited tool we call logic.

A second reason for the juxtaposition of these types of laws with the experience at Sinai is to tell us that just like God is unlimited and infinite, so are all of the commandments. Every mitzvah, even those that appear to be logical and intellectually accessible, are far broader and deeper than they appear. All the mitzvot have infinite wisdom and ramifications embedded within them that are beyond the limitations of our logic and intellect. Therefore, if a person does a Mitzvah only because it makes logical sense, they are missing out on the depth and breadth of the powers of the Mitzvah that are beyond the limited tool we call logic.

We conclude then that the foundation for all mitzvot that we do—even those that we do for apparently logical reasons—are performed because we have faith in God. This guarantees that we will always be on the proper path. This way we know, at all times, we are doing what we are supposed to be doing. So even these logical, simple laws can be transformed into a vehicle with which we can connect ourselves with God, the creator of the world. ■

Listening to our better angels

Rabbi Robert Dobrusin, special to the WJN

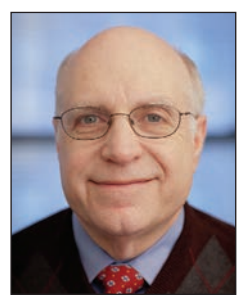
This article is based on a sermon delivered at Beth Israel Congregation on November 21, 2015, Shabbat Parashat Vayetze.

Angels play a major role in the life of Jacob, beginning in this parasha with the story of our patriarch's dream of a ladder reaching up to the heavens with angels ascending and descending. Whether you regard angels in a real or metaphoric or mythic sense, their role as messengers of God in Jewish tradition is worthy of serious consideration.

A prominent traditional rabbinic interpretation of Jacob's dream is that he is witnessing the "changing of the guard". The angels who have protected him within the land of Canaan are returning to the heavens while those who will protect him outside the land are taking their positions. The dream is seen as an assurance by God that Jacob will be protected in his travels outside of Canaan as he was inside the land.

In the dream, the angels are ascending and descending and this brings up a question: Was there any overlap? Was there ever any moment when both sets of angels were directly accompanying Jacob? I would assume that there would have to be such an overlap even for only a short moment as otherwise, there would have been the possibility that Jacob would have been left defenseless even only for a moment.

This question of "overlapping angels" may be reflected in the well-known Shabbat song called *Shalom Aleichem*. This song is based on the tradition that angels accompany us in our homes on *erev* Shabbat and therefore we must greet them properly with words of greeting. But, it is odd that in the second verse we welcome the angels with *boachem lishalom*, "come in peace" and then, in the third verse, we say *tzeitchem lishalom*, "Go in peace." Why would we give the angels the traditional greeting of farewell when they have just arrived?



Rabbi Robert Dobrusin

There are several answers to this question but the one that I prefer is that we are in fact saying goodbye to different angels: the angels who have been with us through the week who now are returning to the heavens after the long six days of work. We say, "go in peace", inviting them to have a good rest and come back after Shabbat. Note though that we do not say goodbye to them until we have welcomed the Shabbat angels. There is overlap. We are never left without angels. Messengers of God are always around us.

This idea of two different sets of angels is found in another rabbinic context as well. There is a lovely legend that when God sought to create the human being, two sets of angels argued about the plan. One group said that God should create the human being because we would be capable of doing acts of kindness and justice. The other group said God should not create human beings because of the evil that would arise from our actions. God, chooses to create the human being in hopes that the good will outweigh the bad.

We need to be God's angels on earth, doing the work of saving and enhancing lives. We need to find a way, even given our fears, to respect and continue our commitment to those in need.

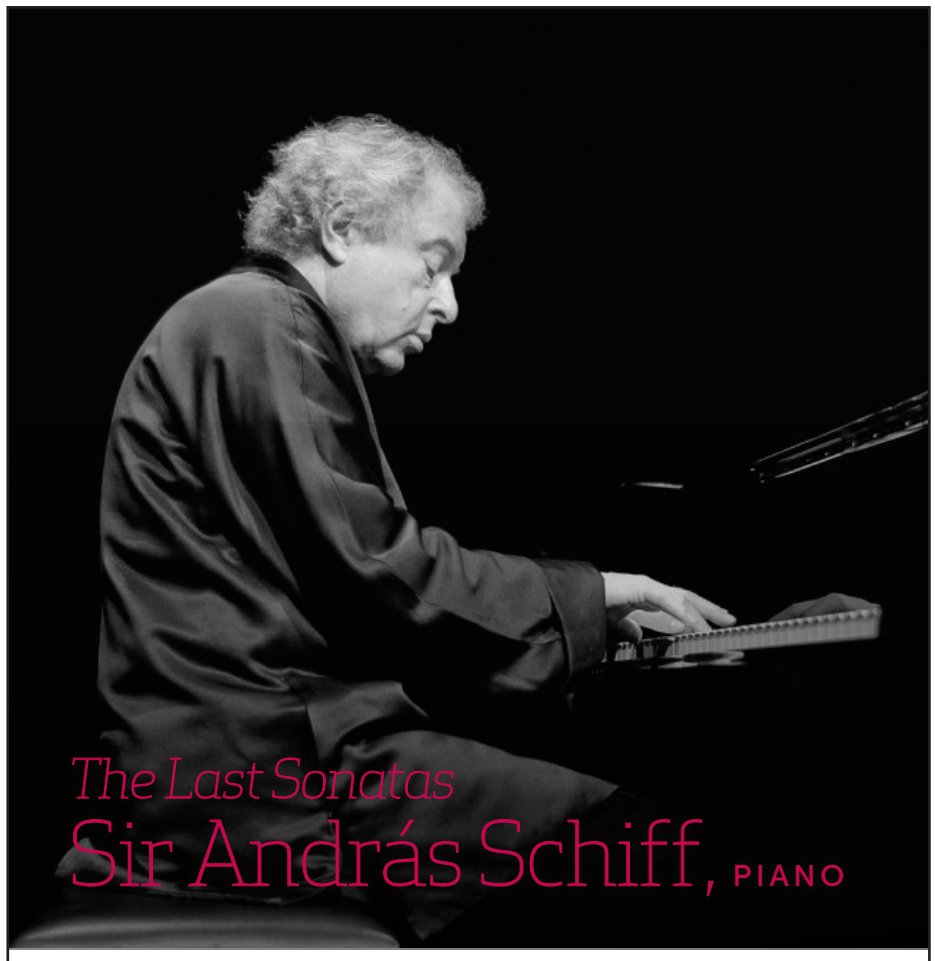
There is another piece to the argument of the angels against creating the human being. The role of the angel was to do on earth what God cannot do: to be messengers of God on earth. Therefore, the angels did not want the human being to be created because they sensed their role would be diminished. And, they were correct. It has been diminished.

Whatever you believe about angels, the fact is that we are God's angels. Human beings are the ones who are to do God's work. We are God's messengers on earth.

The debate between the angels about whether God should or should not create human beings is a reflection of the tension between what we call the *yetzer hatov,* the good inclination, and the *yetzer hara,* the bad inclination, a struggle that our tradition believes goes on inside each of us. This struggle accompanies us always and the strong person, according to *Pirke Avot*, is the one who conquers his or her evil inclination.

But, according to at least one rabbinic text, the *yetzer hara* is not necessarily the inclination to do evil. It is rather seen as the self-centered inclination, the self-protecting inclination. We read in Bereshit Rabbah that even the *yetzer hara* has its place, for if not for the *yetzer hara*, no one would build a home or choose a profession that would provide them their needs. *Yetzer hatov* be-

Continued on page 9



Tuesday, February 16 // 7:30 pm
Thursday, February 18 // 7:30 pm
Saturday, February 20 // 8 pm
Rackham and Hill Auditoriums

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Haydn	Sonata No. 60 in C Major, Hob. XVI:50
Beethoven	Sonata No. 30 in E Major, Op. 109
Mozart	Sonata No. 16 in C Major, K. 545
Schubert	Sonata in c minor, D. 958

PROGRAM (THU 2/18: RACKHAM AUDITORIUM)

Mozart	Sonata No. 17 in B-flat Major, K. 570
Beethoven	Sonata No. 31 in A-flat Major, Op. 110
Haydn	Sonata No. 61 in D Major, Hob. XVI:51
Schubert	Sonata in A Major, D. 959

PROGRAM (SAT 2/20: HILL AUDITORIUM)

Haydn	Sonata No. 62 in E-flat Major, Hob. XVI:52
Beethoven	Sonata No. 32 in c minor, Op. 111
Mozart	Sonata No. 18 in D Major, K. 576
Schubert	Sonata in B-flat Major, D. 960

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February 2016 at Temple Beth Emeth

Avital Ostfield, special to the WJN

Families with Young Children (FYC): Tot Shabbat Service

Friday, February 5, 12, 19, 26, 5:45 p.m., TBE Sanctuary
5:45 p.m. Tot (0–5 year olds) Shabbat Services with Cantor Hayut
6:15 p.m. Dinner for Tot Shabbat, 6:45 p.m. Shira Service

All of your favorite songs led by TBE's tot team, Cantor Hayut and Rabbi Levy.

Join for macaroni and cheese, fish sticks, applesauce, and a salad bar immediately following the short service. Dinner is just $5 per person and this year, buy a punch card ahead of time for a discounted price. Punch cards are available in the TBE office.

Sukkat Shalom—The Peaceful Shelter of Shabbat

Elementary Shabbat Services with Rabbi Levy
Fridays, February 5, 12 and 19, 5:45 p.m., TBE Chapel

What to do after Tot Shabbat no longer meets your needs and, more importantly, the needs of your children? Not to worry, TBE is expanding service offerings for children in grades K–3! Join for Sukkat Shalom, the Peaceful Shelter of Shabbat.

Jewish Mindfulness Meditation Sit

Thursdays, February 4, 11, 18 and 25, 1:15–2 p.m., TBE Chapel

For practitioners of all levels. Intention and instruction followed by 30-minute silent meditation. Facilitated by SooJi Min, Judy Freedman, and Quyen Epstein-Ngo. SooJi Min is TBE's executive director. She recently completed a 16-month mindfulness teacher-training program sponsored by the Institute for Jewish Spirituality and the Awakened Heart Project. Judy Freedman has been meditating for over 20 years. She attended a three-year training in Jewish Meditation sponsored by the Philips Foundation at Chochmat ha Lev. She has previously taught at TBE and is excited to return. Quyen Epstein-Ngo is a therapist who holds a joint doctoral degree in Clinical Psychology and Women's Studies. One of the areas she specializes in is working with adolescents, adults, and couples on issues of faith and spirituality. Contact SooJi Min with questions, 665-4744.

Comforting the Mourner: Preparing all aspects of leading a Shiva Minyan

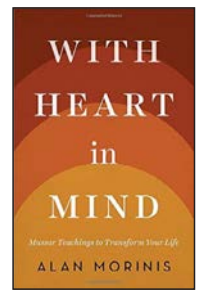
Monday, February 1, 7-9 p.m., TBE Chapel

One of the greatest mitzvot in Jewish practice is comforting the mourner. In these 2 hour class sessions, learn with Cantor Hayut the various skills needed to lead a shiva minyan. This class will address the specific aspects of the service. Assignments will be made in advance of each session so that this working practice group can hone their skills in front of others before leading a formal service. All participants will receive take home materials for future reference. Contact cantorhayut@templebethemeth.org for more information.

The Spirituality Book Club

Tuesday, February 9, 7:30 p.m.
Thursday, February 11, noon

February's Book: *With Heart in Mind: Mussar Teachings to Transform Your Life*, by Alan Morinis



Cantor Emerita Annie Rose returns to TBE to facilitate the spirituality book club, generously sponsored by the Year of Torah Fund. It will meet monthly from October-May. Each month will feature a different book with two session times. The book club will meet Thursdays at lunchtime (noon-1 p.m.) and Tuesday evenings at 7:30 p.m., in the adult lounge at TBE.

Shalom Gever—Peaceful Warrior Martial Arts

Mondays, February 1, 8, 15, 22, and 29, 4:15–7 p.m., TBE Social Hall
Tuesdays, February 2, 9, 16, and 23, 4:15–7 p.m., TBE Room 7 and 8
Fridays, February 5, 12, 19, and 26, 3:30–5:45 p.m., TBE Room 7 and 8
Register Today! | Health, Healing and Self-Defense

Try out this unique martial arts instruction including lessons in how to live a healthy lifestyle, be energetic, do well in school and learn anti-bullying self-defense. 12-week semesters for belt advancement. Drop-in when schedules permit. Enrollment is open for students and their parents. Shalom Gever is taught by Rabbi Peter Gluck, 5th Degree Black Belt and martial arts instructor for 18 years. Contact the Temple Beth Emeth office at 665-4744 or Rabbi Gluck, info@shalomgever.org, for more registration information.

Adult Yoga Classes with Shlomit!

Thursdays, February 4, 11, 18 and 25, 12–1:15 p.m., TBE Social Hall

To learn more about the instructor, Shlomit Cohen, check out her website at mivyoga.com

If you would like to purchase a package, please RSVP to aostfield@templebethemeth.org

Weekly Lunch and Learn: Is There a Social Justice Agenda in Judaism?

Fridays, February 5, 12, 19 and 26, 12:30–1:30 p.m., TBE Adult Lounge

Each week, Rabbi Levy brings his choice of text. They will come from both inside and outside the Jewish tradition and from the Torah exploring a social justice agenda in our communities. Feel free to come whenever possible and bring a lunch.

[E]met: An Honest Conversation about Death

Thursday, February 18, 7 p.m., TBE

Emet means truth and met is death. Come join for an ongoing monthly discussion group about death. The purpose is to increase the awareness of death with a view to helping people make the most of their (finite) lives. [E]met is a group directed discussion of death with no specific agenda other than to share stories, ideas and experiences. While a decidedly Jewish context will be offered, the discussion is not limited by any one belief. [E]met is not a grief support group or a counseling session, but rather an opportunity to grapple with this important part of life within a community of others, and of course, to share a nosh. This will be co-facilitated by Brian Ashin, and Rabbi Levy.

Men's Torah Study Reinvented

Every 2nd and 4th Monday, February 8 and 22, 7 p.m., TBE

A men's Torah discussion group will be led by a lay leader on the 2nd Monday and by Rabbi Levy on the 4th Monday. Find our way as men by wrestling with text. For more information contact Bill Parkus, parkus@comcast.net.

Women's Torah Study

Every 2nd and 4th Monday, February 8 and 22, 7 p.m., TBE

Led by Cantor Regina Hayut, the group will explore various passages from the portion looking at several translations and commentaries from a variety of scholars from Talmudic times to the modern day. No Hebrew knowledge necessary. For questions, contact Cantor Hayut at cantorhayut@templebethemeth.org.

Beyond Pentateuch: The Rest of the Hebrew Bible

Tuesday, March 1, 7:30 p.m., TBE

Join for guided discussions of the Hebrew Bible we know less well. The group will read from ancient prophets, historical narrative, from Joshua to the Babylonian exile, the poetry of Psalms, Job and more…. In each seminar, texts chosen will be discussed by a specialist in history, textual analysis, ancient Near Eastern civilization, or maybe even archeology. Enjoy informal exchanges; learn from scholars and each other; chat over refreshments after class.

Registration is not required, but it will allow for emailing the focus texts. To register, contact Leonore Gerstein lbmgerst@gmail.com 930-1673.

NFTY Winter Kallah

Friday, February 5–Sunday, February 7, TBE

TBE is hosting the Southeast Michigan NFTY region for a weekend kallah. Don't miss the Friday night NFTY service at 7:30 p.m. in the TBE Sanctuary led by teens!

Rishonim

Sunday, February 14, Noon, off-site

Join the 3–5th grade youth group for a movie afternoon event! Movie TBD. For more info, contact tbeyouth.annarbor@gmail.com. ■

Listening to our better angels, *continued from page 7*

comes the altruistic inclination and *yetzer hara* becomes the self-protecting inclination and both are needed in a life. There needs to be overlap of altruism and concern for self.

And now let us turn away from angels and turn to the real world.

I am sympathetic to the perspective that led Governor Snyder and many other governors, politicians and private citizens to decide that this is not the time to welcome Syrian refugees into our country. I understand their fears and I do not say that lightly. Their concern that our security structures are not proficient enough to weed out any individuals or groups capable of performing the kind of horrific terrorist attacks that occurred in Paris or Beirut or Turkey or so many other places in our world is worth consideration. It didn't take the attacks in Paris to prove that adherents of this horribly perverse way of thinking and acting are a threat to our communities and our nation as well. And, it is natural and reasonable for a Governor to see his or her role as protecting our self-interest, to listen to his or her *yetzer hara* rather than the *yetzer hatov.*

But, while it may be reasonable to be concerned, the proposal to close the doors on Syrian refugees is shortsighted, inappropriate and wrong. It is based on misleading claims and exaggerated fears concerning the refugee population. And, as this proposal has gained momentum, the rhetoric has turned increasingly racist and cruel and that is shameful.

We should care about protecting ourselves but we need to listen to our *yetzer hatov*, to our good and altruistic inclination as well. We need to be God's angels on earth, doing the work of saving and enhancing lives. We need to find a way, even given our fears, to respect and continue our commitment to those in need. We cannot look into the eyes of these people who have been so horribly victimized and just close our doors. It is wrong for a country that speaks of being a source of good in the world. And, here, I want to commend our local Jewish Family Service and HIAS, the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society which has rescued so many people, Jews and non-Jews in the past for committing to continuing to support and welcome, after proper security checks, Syrian refugees to this country.

Our angels must overlap. We can honor the inclination to self-protection while not dismissing the inclination that inspires us to care for the huddled masses who have been through such horrors. We need to listen to our better angels and continue to find a way, despite our fears, to reach out our hand to those whom we can help.

We all have concerns about the state of the world but those fears cannot undermine our basic sense of humanity.

We cannot close our hearts. We cannot close our door. ■

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Recon Congregation (re)constructs its ritual objects

Clare Kinberg and Emily Eisbruch, special to the WJN

Among the core values of Reconstructionist Judaism are creative participation and personal responsibility towards the community. One expression of these values in the Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Congregation are its member created ritual objects including its Torah table, Torah tapestries, and *aron hakodesh*/ark. Members of AARC feel that the creation of each piece enriches the ones who make it as well as the whole community, joining the members' love for Jewish ritual and the AARC community to create something both meaningful and beautiful.

The most recent addition to this collection is a new *yad* created by AARC member and metal artist Idelle Hammond-Sass. A "*yad*," literally "hand" in Hebrew, is a pointer used by a Torah reader to keep their place while reading. Hammond-Sass was originally asked to repair the congregation's existing *yad*, but discovered it couldn't be repaired because it had been commercially made by electro-forming, a process that deposits thin layers of silver over wax. Unable to repair it, she offered to make a new *yad*. With a donation of the fine metals by another congregant, Hammond-Sass was able to create something unique to the congregation, rather than a mass produced piece picked out of a catalog.

Before making this *yad*, Hammond-Sass had made numerous *mezzuzot*, menorahs, other commissioned Torah pointers, and a sterling *tzedakah* box. One *mezzuzah* design she calls "Twelve elements" for the 12 tribes, and her menorah, "Sparks of Renewal," were exhibited a few years ago at the Detroit JCC's Janice Charach Gallery.

To begin work on the new *yad*, Hammond-Sass thought back to her own bat

Idelle Hammond-Sass

mitzvah *parasha, Ki Tisa*, which, she says, "included the construction of the *mishkan*/sacred space. I love that we at AARC have constructed our own *mishkan*, both figuratively and metaphorically. Thinking about making a *yad* for the congregation I was drawn to use the leaf and branches on the Tree of Life, as in our welcoming logo, and to reflect the tree motif we are working on for our Torah tapestry."

To make sure that the *yad* would be easy to hold and handle, Hammond-Sass asked several of the congregation's regular Torah readers, with different sized hands, to try out and give her feedback on a long piece of heavy triangular sterling silver tubing that she wanted to use for its base. The triangular shape of the tubing made a Star of David an inherent design possibility. Both ends of the tube were cut at an angle to al-

The new yad created by Hammond-Sass

low a star to be placed on one end, and a pointer on the other, using 14k gold to accent the silver. Working hard to finish in time to use the new *yad* by the High Holidays, she kept sketching and changing the design right through the crafting of the piece. Sterling silver is soldered near 900° with an air/gas acetelyne torch, a time-consuming process that requires extreme care.

Creating the pointer end of the *yad* was the most difficult design decision to make on this piece. Hammond-Sass explains, "I strive for asymmetrical balance and did not want a 'literal' hand at the end, so the branch continues and a gold leaf points the way for the reader. Each leaf is made by hand and the leaves and triangle wire that forms the branch is soldered on separately, each one added till it visually 'works.'"

To complete the project, Hammond-Sass attached the chain from the previous *yad*, and her husband Dale made a beautiful cherry wood box out of the same material used for the congregation's Torah reading table.

On reflection, Hammond-Sass found making the *yad* was a rewarding process that gave back to her spirit, "While soldering on the branch, I sang *Ahava Rabah*. I share my gratitude for the opportunity to make this special piece for our community." AARC members are very grateful for this wonderful gift, says AARC chair Margo Schlanger: "It has already become a treasured object, because it symbolizes the connection between our congregation and the Torah."

To learn more about Idelle's artwork, see her website at http://www.idellehammond-sass.com. For more about AARC, see http:// aarecon.org. ■

Beth Israel activities for February

Elliot Sorkin, special to the WJN

Midrash in Hebrew Class

Wednesday, February 4, 11, 18 and 24, 1:30–2:30 p.m.

Texts will be read in Hebrew and English transliterations will be available. We will focus on the ideas expressed in the midrashim and in the way the rabbis read and interpret the Hebrew text of the Torah. Newcomers are welcome. For more information, contact Rabbi Dobrusin.

Tot Shabbat

Saturdays, February 13 and 27, 11:15 a.m.

Tot Shabbat is a Saturday morning program/service for parents and their children 2 – 5 years old which is organized around songs, stories, and prayers. It includes the mysterious "Shabbat Box," a Torah procession with stuffed Torah toys, and a Kiddush for tots. There is no charge for this program.

Lunch & Learn Series

Wednesdays, February 3, 19, 17, and 24 at the Garfunkel Schteingart Activities Center (2010 Washtenaw), noon–1:15 p.m.

Rabbi Robert Dobrusin and Rabbi Kim Blumenthal lead informal discussions on current topics. Participants are invited to bring a dairy lunch. Beverages and snacks will be provided.

World Wide Wrap XV

February 7, 9:30–11:30 a.m.

This event, sponsored by the Federation of Jewish Men's Clubs, encourages Conservative and Masorti congregations throughout the world to come together one morning a year to celebrate the mitzvah of putting on tefillin. There will be a short lesson on the putting on of tefillin followed by a Shacharit service and concluding with a bagels and lox brunch. Beth Israel is known for its Polar Bear photo of tefillin clad participants taken each year outside the building, regardless of the weather.

Extra sets of tefillin will be available for people who do not have their own to use, with volunteers to teach men and women how to lay tefillin. For additional information, call or e-mail Haran Rashes at 660-9283 or email haran@umich.edu.

Centennial Museum and the Centennial Museum Opening Reception

From February 2–9 visitors to Beth Israel will have the opportunity to view photos, news articles, artifacts, ritual objects, and assorted exhibits which reveal highlights of Beth Israel's first 100 years. The museum will be open on February 2, 9 a.m.–10 p.m.; February 3, 9 a.m.–6 p.m.; February 4, 9 a.m.–5 p.m.; February 5, 9 a.m.–3 p.m.; February 7, 9 a.m.– 3 p.m. February 8 and 9, 9 a.m.–5 p.m.

A committee headed by Fran Martin and composed of Beth Dwoskin, Carol Finerman, Richard Adler and Helen Aminoff have carefully selected representative exhibits to display.

On February 2, at 8 p.m. the community is invited to an opening event reception.

Carlebach and Chicken Soup

Friday, February 19, 6 p.m. Kabbalat Shabbat Service; 7 p.m. Chicken Soup Friday Night Dinner

Participants enjoy lots of communal singing utilizing the lively and soulful melodies mostly composed by Rabbi Shlomo Carlebach. A fully transliterated prayer book is available for use.

Following the service there is a Chicken Soup Shabbat dinner. There is no charge for attending the service. The dinner fees are $15 per person 11 years old and up, and $10 per person per child 4–10. Dinner includes a chicken soup (vegetarian soup option) buffet: chicken soup, matzah balls, kreplach (dumplings with ground meat) rice, noodles, soup chicken, carrots soup nuts, coffee/tea and dessert. Reservations and payment are due before the event begins.

Beth Israel Blood Drive

Sunday, March 20, 9:30 a.m.–3:15 p.m.

Registration Has Started! Saving a life is one of the most important mitzvot in Judaism. To register for an appointment, go to www.redcrossblood.org. When searching for a blood drive the sponsor code "bic13" If there is a problem registering online, contact Any Abrams-Blakemore at 649-1608 and leave a full name, email address, phone number, and range of time to be scheduled. (e.g.: "around 11 am). An email back will confirm the scheduled time. At this annual event, Beth Israel serves freshly baked cookies and hot cocoa to all those who sign up.

Henry Gershowitz Memorial Participatory Shabbat

Saturday, February 27, 9:30 a.m.

Volunteers from the congregation lead every part of the service on this Shabbat which honors the memory of Beth Israel's past-President, Henry Gershowitz. Henry, who died in 1998, was not only a pillar of the congregation, he was also a regular at Shabbat Services, often leading Pesukei D'zimrah, and he also served as the Wednesday night minyan captain. Henry encouraged new members to participate in leading the Saturday service which has inspired Beth Israel Men's Club and Women's League to honor him with this annual event. The service is followed by a Kiddush luncheon.

Motown Live Dance

Sunday, February 28, 6:30–9 p.m.

Beth Israel's Women's League, Men's Club and Social Action Committee are sponsoring another Motown Dance Party to raise money for Beth Israel's Alternative Spring Break fund. It's a good time for a good cause.

The Motown Dance Party features Soultivity, Ann Arbor's only all-lawyer Motown and R&B band, featuring Beth Israel's own Bob Carbeck on drums. Participants enjoy live music and a nosh. There will be a cash bar. Admission is $10 in advance and $15 at the door, with all proceeds going to support Beth Israel's Alternative Spring Break. Advance payment may be sent to the Beth Israel office.

For more information contact Marcie Greenfield at marciegreen@yahoo.com or Dennie Carbeck at dencarb@comcast.net.

For more information or to sign up, contact Charles Weaver at 677-1736, weaverchas@gmail.com or Dennie Carbeck at 663-0452, dencarb@comcast.net. Online sign-up is available on Beth Israel's website, www.bethisrael-aa.org. See Events Sign-up. ■

Countering Islamaphobia

Deb Kraus, special to the WJN

By the time this issue of the *Washtenaw Jewish News* is distributed, the first of many banners will be adorning places of worship around Washtenaw County. The banners read "One Human Family: We welcome our refugee and Muslim neighbors" and are the latest collaboration between Interfaith Council for Peace and Justice (ICPJ) and Interfaith Roundtable (IRT).

Religious teachings are full of directives to welcome strangers, foreigners and all those who need help. From the Torah ("the stranger who resides with you shall be to you as the native among you, and you shall love him as yourself, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt; I am the lord your God." Leviticus 19:34) to the Quran ("Worship Allah and associate nothing with Him, and to parents do good, and to relatives, orphans, the needy, the near neighbor, the neighbor who is a stranger… verily, God does not love any of those who, full of self-conceit, act in a boastful manner." An-Nisaa' 4:36), all major faiths speak to this basic notion.

Why this campaign? As we are all too aware, Islamaphobia is on the rise, in part because of national and world events "sponsored" by radical extremists who use Islam to promote a non-Islamic agenda and in part because of US presidential candidates who are exploiting this issue and feeding hate and fear. The goal is to demonstrate that the community's many traditions and systems of belief favor hospitality over hostility, and love over hate. Chuck Warpehoski, executive director of ICPJ adds, "We are excited for this chance for congregations to both publicly show their support for inclusion as well as internally look at ways they can take concrete action to support refugees and the Muslim community."

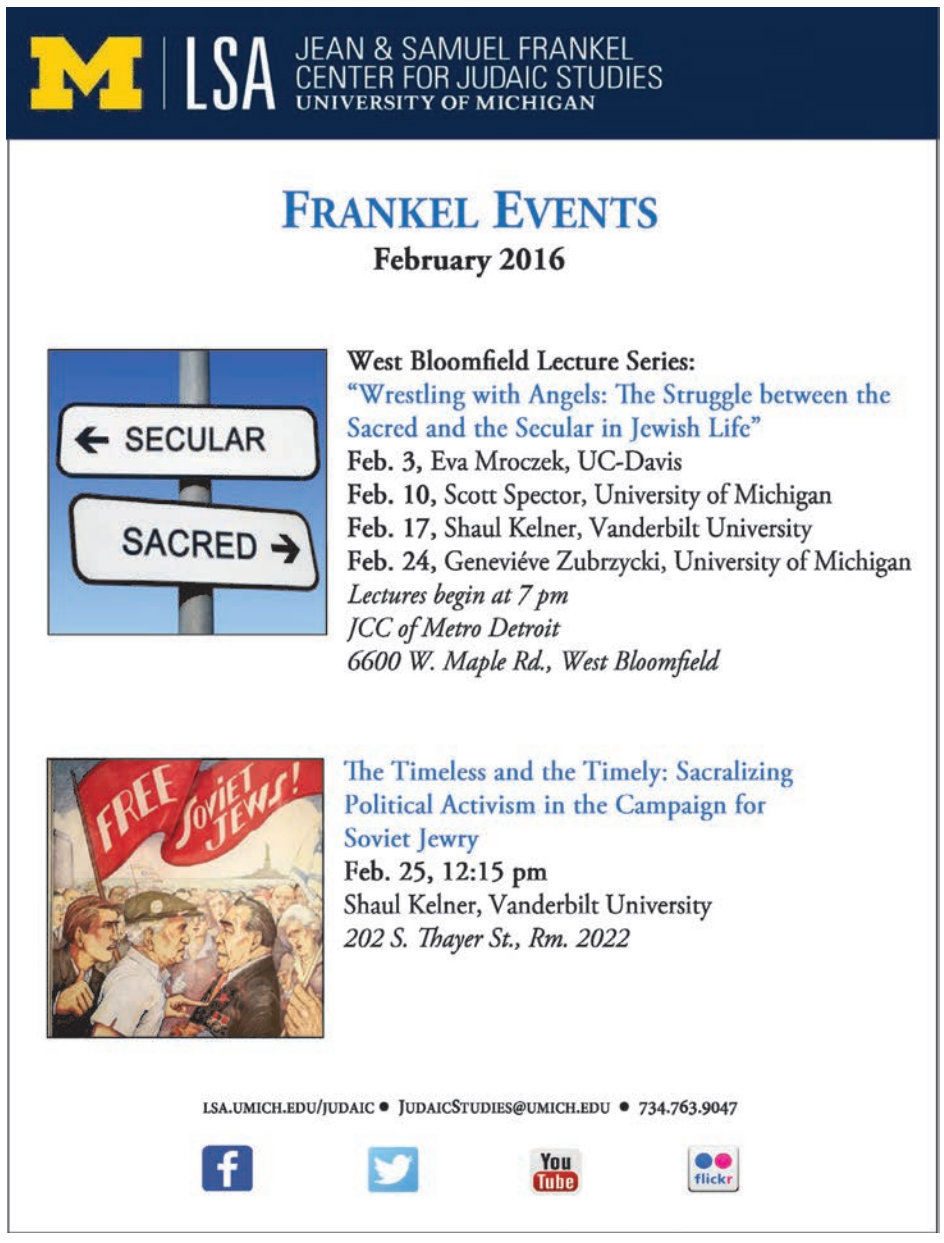
Why a banner? As with ICPJ's "Torture is Wrong" campaign eight years ago, banners on places of worship are designed to show solidarity on a specific issue. In this case, the goal is to publically demonstrate that many stand in solidarity with those being targeted. "One human family" was chosen as the catch phrase because it emphasizes that when brothers and sisters are in trouble, people of faith will come to their aid.

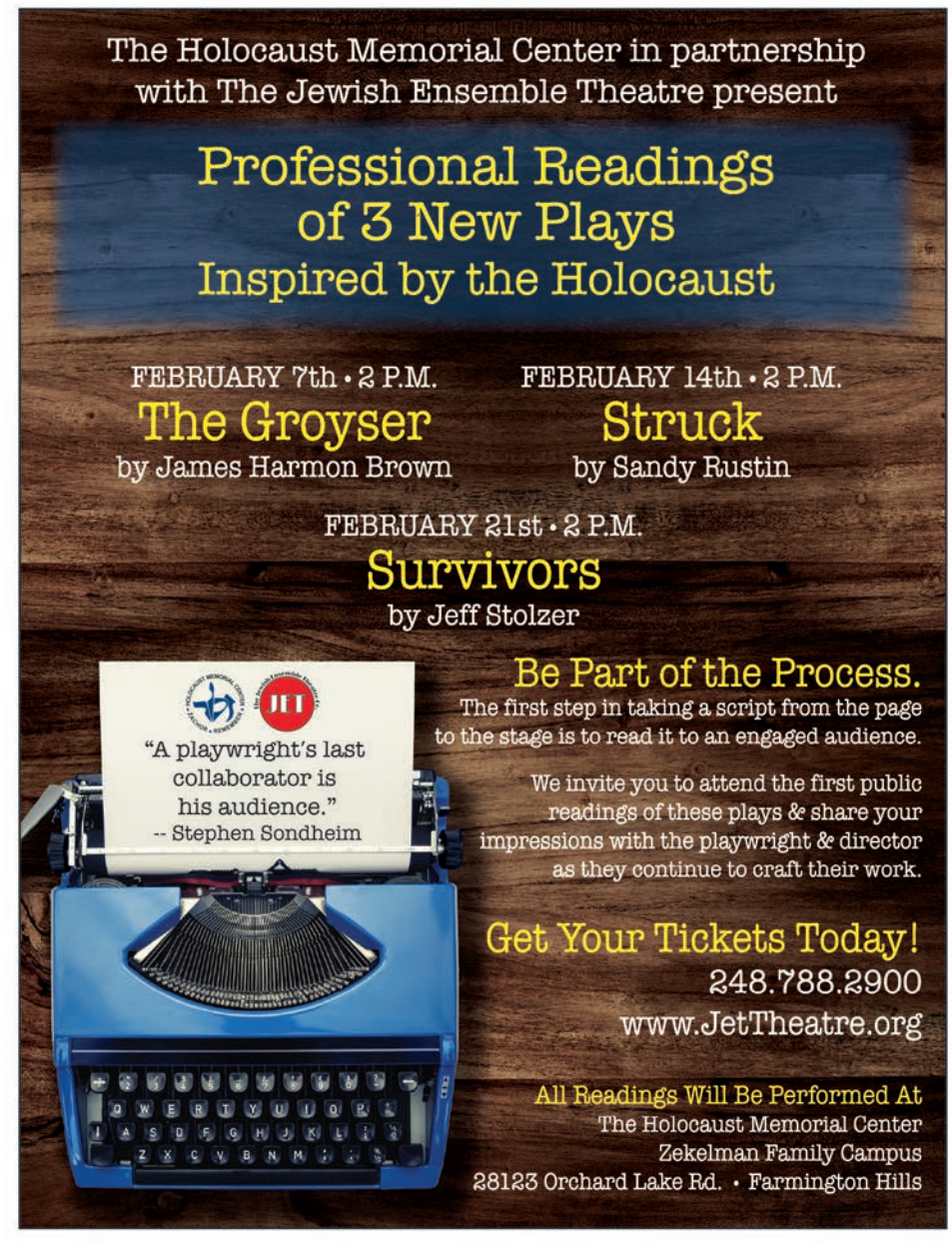
What else is involved with this campaign? The campaign, at press time, was still lining up places of worship to feature the sign prominently on the outside of their buildings. Yard signs will be distributed, and a website (www.1humanfamily.org) and facebook page (www.facebook.com/OneHumanFamily-Washtenaw) has gone up with FAQs, distribution information and other ways to help refugees. The FAQs also include a little historical background on the Syrian crisis, dispel some too-prevalent myths about refugees and Islam, and feature others ways to help, emphasizing the central role of Jewish Family Services.

While for many, banners and yard signs seem like just a "feel good" exercise with no tangible benefit, Bryan Weinert, president of IRT and former board chair of ICPJ (as well as a member of Zion Lutheran Church, the first place of worship to agree to host a banner), notes, "We cannot afford to allow our Muslim brothers and sisters to believe that we, their neighbors, are standing idly by while they are being profiled, targeted and stereotyped. That is not what solidarity is all about. Peaceful, welcoming communities are an important piece of the change we want to see and thus our obligation to create." He goes on, "Religion is already a part of this debate, as public figures have used their faith as an excuse to profile Muslims and exclude refugees. We need to send a strong message to media and elected officials that religion and faith cannot, and will not, be used to oppress and divide us. We also hope that these explicit displays of solidarity will help to tip the balance towards compassion in the hearts of those who are unsure of which voices to heed."

What's next? On March 20, ICPJ is sponsoring a presentation by Aziz Abu Sarah, a cultural educator, co-founder of MEDJI tours, a TED fellow and a National Geographic Explorer, focusing on Jews and Palestinians who are overcoming their narratives and working together for peace. This event will also feature efforts by local groups to work together to promote understanding, compassion and cooperative action, with the ultimate goal of peace in the Middle East. For more information on this event, contact ICPJ at 663-1870 or at www.icpj.org. ■

Deb Kraus is vice president of ICPJ and a member of the Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Congregation. She has been active in this campaign.





Sheva Fellows selected as leaders in Jewish early childhood education

Clara Silver, special to the WJN

Susan Horowitz, a senior member of the Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor's Early Childhood Center staff, has been selected as one of 20 fellows nationwide to participate in the Jewish Community Center Association's first Sheva–Covenant Directors Institute. The Directors Institute is a three-year program that will provide concrete skills and knowledge to develop fellows as leaders in the field of early childhood education. Funded by a $230,000 Covenant Foundation Signature Grant, the program is designed to develop high quality leadership to ensure excellence in programming in the field and address anticipated leadership shortages.

Susan Horowitz

The JCC Early Childhood Center has been providing high quality early childhood care and education to the Ann Arbor community for over 25 years. Its mission is to provide a safe, warm, child-centered Jewish learning community where children and adults explore ideas, develop skills, and gain knowledge together. Susan currently serves as the Head Teacher for the Infant and Toddler program. JCC ECC Director Peretz Hirshbein excitedly shared that, "Susan is a passionate advocate for excellence in Jewish early childhood education. This fellowship will be very important for giving her the tools to turn her passion into visionary leadership. I am thrilled that the JCCA is taking intensive, proactive actions to ensure that the field of Jewish early childhood education will continue to have great leadership for years to come."

"This opportunity is so valuable," says Horowitz. "I am excited for this journey both to develop my leadership skills as well as the opportunity to work with other early childhood professionals from JCCs around the country. It's been a great opportunity to learn from my peers around the country, and to connect my Ann Arbor colleagues with their peers at our sister institutions."

The 19 fellows come from Jewish Community Centers in a diverse range of communities including Salt Lake City, Utah, Newton, Massachusetts; LaJolla, California; and Austin, Texas; to name a few. During the three-year program, fellows will participate in both distance-learning and in-person retreats, as well as a study tour to Israel. In addition, the fellows will work on a national director's credential, Aim4Excellence, through the McCormick Center for Early Childhood Leadership at the National Louis University in Chicago.

The fellows currently serve in leadership roles in their respective JCC's early childhood programs and have expressed a desire to stay and advance within the field. The Directors Institute will allow them to do that, while ensuring that future educators benefit from the knowledge and research gleaned as the Directors Institute develops and imparts best practices, and seeds the field with those steeped in highest standards and grounded in Jewish knowledge.

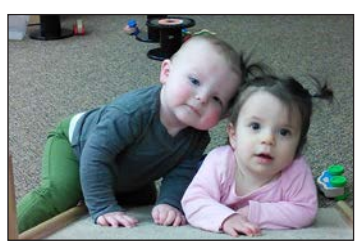
In all, there are 147 JCC early childhood programs in North America, which educate approximately 21,000 children. "This is an exciting opportunity to shape the field of Jewish early childhood education," says Mark Horowitz, JCC Association's vice president for early childhood education and family engagement. "Focusing on the directors allows us to continue providing excellent education that has become synonymous with what JCC's offer; we're very grateful to the Covenant Foundation for recognizing this and providing this opportunity."

JCCA research indicated that over the next five to seven years, approximately 40 percent of active JCC early childhood education directors will retire. There has been no plan in place to ensure a steady stream of qualified candidates to ensure continuity. The Directors Institute, by focusing on early childhood center leadership, intends to address this. The JCCA is the leadership network for the Jewish Community Center movement comprising 350 JCC, YM-YWHA, and campsites in the U.S. and Canada. JCCA offers a wide range of services and resources to strengthen the capacity of its affiliates. JCCA is also a U.S. government-accredited agency for serving the religious and social needs of Jewish military personnel, their families, and patients in VA hospitals through JWB Jewish Chaplains Council. ■

Early Childhood Center annual enrollment begins

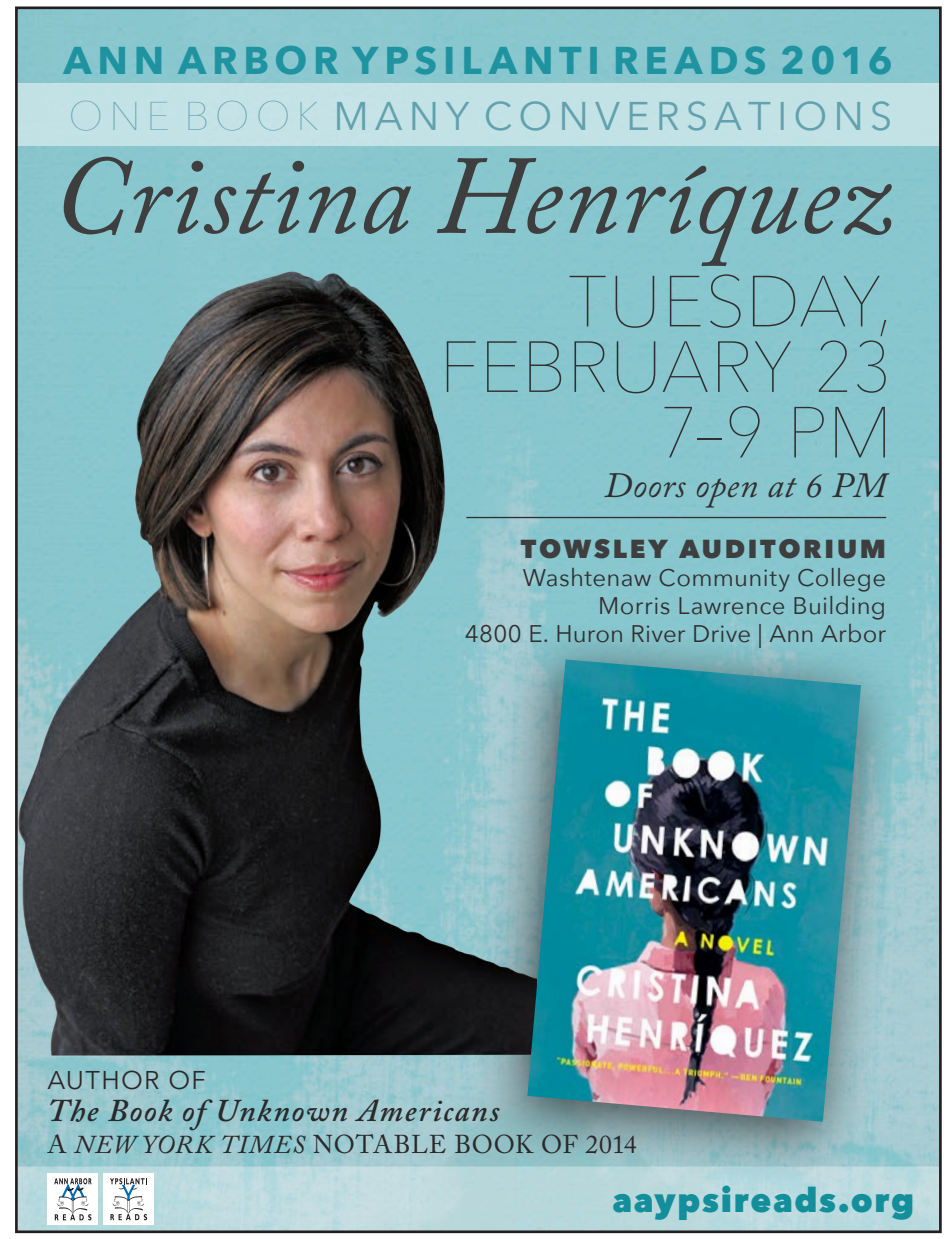
Peretz Hirshbein, special to the WJN

The Early Childhood Center at the Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor will be accepting new applications for both the childcare and preschool programs for the 2016–2017 school year beginning Monday, February 15. First priority is given to siblings of children currently enrolled in the ECC. Applications from families of local affiliate Jewish organizations, such as local synagogues or the Hebrew Day School of Ann Arbor, are next in priority, followed by applications from the general public.



The ECC offers programs for children ages 2 months to five years. Infants thrive in the ECC's home-like dedicated infant rooms. The toddler program at the ECC is specially designed to meet the unique needs of children in this rapidly developing age group. Children over the age of three participate in full and half day preschool programs designed to prepare children for kindergarten. The ECC's teachers provide a responsive curriculum that allows them to challenge and nurture children at all developmental levels. Language and literacy, math, science, social studies, and physical development are combined with Jewish celebrations and values to create an integrated curriculum.

For more information about the JCC's Early Childhood Center, call 971-0990 or email ecc@jccannarbor.org. ■



Camp Gan Israel—a summer of fun, a lifetime of memories

Chana Sara Elias, special to the WJN

Since 1998 Shternie Zwiebel of Chabad of Ann Arbor has served as director of Camp Gan Israel in Ann Arbor, part of the largest network of Jewish camps worldwide. The camp began with 28 campers and has grown each year, with over 100 campers in 2015.

The camp offers iCamp, which is a camper-chosen activity of the day. Whether the student prefers sports, arts and crafts or science, iCamp provides the option for the campers to choose what they are most interested in. Larry Biederman, known as "Larry the Science Guy," recently had his "bar mitzvah" at CGI, where they honored him two years ago for 13 years of bringing science-fun to CGI.

"Prior to CGI, I shuttled my son to a different camp each week to support his interests in sports, science, animals, swimming, and cooking," said a parent of a 7-year-old camper. "Now, we send him to CGI all summer long because it fulfills all of his interests and more."

Popular trips include a boat trip on the Detroit River and ice skating. Feedback is used from year to year to keep ideas fresh and exciting, in addition to bringing back past favorites.

"The Detroit boat is by far the most favorite activity—it's a dance party on the boat in the middle of the river!" said Leah Meltzer of Brooklyn, N.Y. She has been coming every summer to help with CGI for the past four years. She began as a counselor and quickly moved up to Zwiebel's "right-hand woman."

Beyond all of the activities, what draws many campers to CGI are the counselors. Zwiebel interviews and handpicks a select group of counselors each year from all over the world. The counselors create a special bond between them and their campers, including home visits during "Goodnight, Gan Izzy," a program where the counselors come to make an arts and craft activity and then tuck the campers in to bed.

"[The ideas are] a lot of instructors and outside ideas (from parents and campers)—they're everyone's ideas! So much more of a flow of ideas come through when everyone helps to contribute," said Meltzer.

Shoshanna Goldberg started at CGI in 2000 when she was 5 years old. She said her parents kept sending her back because she was happy and it was a professionally run camp. She enjoyed it so much that she kept going back and eventually became a junior counselor, which she continued as for the next three years.

"I always looked forward to the counselors because they were nice, fun and good role models," said Goldberg. "[CGI] is run by people that care and you feel that people care about you at camp."

Each year, CGI has a Jewish theme that helps to incorporate different Jewish ideas each week, and usually no matter the theme, there's always a pretend Jewish wedding. It gets the campers involved with their Jewish heritage, a key part of what makes CGI special. The themes give names to each of the bunks, such as "Davening Dice," or "Brachos Bases."

For the campers aged 10 to 12, there is the group called Pioneers. This is a unique division of CGI, and it operates on the same premises as the rest of the camp. There are still iCamps, and many times the ideas are parallel, however they are geared to the older campers. The highlight of the Pioneers is the overnight trip to Cedar Point. After they age out of Pioneers, many elect to come back as a junior counselor, giving the same camp spirit over to the younger campers. The campers look forward to being in Pioneers since they join CGI in the youngest bunk.

Each year at CGI, new friendships are made, old friendships are rekindled and the love for camp permeates the hearts of each camper. The vision of Zwiebel when she created the camp was for the campers to have a place they feel comfortable being Jewish, creating friendships and having fun.

"What we want the kids to walk away from camp with is that they're Jewish and that they're proud of being Jewish," said Meltzer, "and when in a world surrounded by different people to be proud of who they are."

Camp registration opens February 1. Camp Dates: are June 27–August 5. For more information or to register, call 995-3276 #5 or go to www.mycampganisrael.com. ■

An afternoon with Justice Bernstein

Angela Johnson, special to WJN

On Thursday, January 7, Michigan Supreme Court Justice Richard H. Bernstein spent the afternoon at Hebrew Day School of Ann Arbor. His visit began with lunch with the fifth grade student council, who appreciated the opportunity to speak informally with Justice Bernstein. The students shared information about their recent philanthropic efforts for A2A3-Active Against ALS and. Following the luncheon, Justice Bernstein gave a master-class on leadership and service. The master-class was attended by HDS third, fourth, fifth grade students and their families, members of the HDS board of trustees, HDS administration and supporters of Higher Ground.

Ali Reingold, Jennifer Rosenberg, Justice Bernstein and Angela Johnson

Michigan Supreme Court Justice Richard H. Bernstein became the first blind justice, elected by voters statewide, to the Michigan Supreme Court in November 2014. With a commitment to justice and fairness, Bernstein began his eight-year term in January 2015. Honors Justice Bernstein has received include: "Michiganian of the Year" by the Detroit News, one of Crain's Detroit Business' "40 Under 40" and recognition on worldwide television by CNN as a leader in keeping government honest. He was selected by The Young Lawyers Section of the State Bar of Michigan as the 2003–2004 Regeana Myrick Outstanding Young Lawyer Award recipient for outstanding commitment to public service and is the recipient of the 2008 John W. Cummiskey Pro Bono Award from the State Bar of Michigan in recognition of his leadership as an advocate and activist.

The afternoon that was spent with Justice Bernstein will impact the audience on many different levels for years to come. He spoke about the challenges of growing up and living with a disability and encouraged the children to be inclusive. As he told the students, "Figuring out what to do can be complicated at times but in the end it's really simple, just be kind." He then asked the children to think of the kindest kid in their class and told them to "be that kid." Clearly inspired to greatness by his differences, he finished by saying, "I don't have an easy life, but I have an extraordinary life."

Justice Bernstein's visit was made possible by a collaboration of Hebrew Day School of Ann Arbor and Higher Ground, with both groups extending their gratitude to Justice Bernstein and his team for their leadership within the State. ■

Higher Ground is committed to providing opportunities for youth to develop and expand their awareness of leadership and service by directly connecting youth to leaders in their community, state and nation. For more information on this upcoming establishment within the community, submit interest to seehigherground.com or call 646-3216 to reach founder Angela Johnson directly.

JFS Kids Care Fair returns March 6

Sarah Schneider Hong, special to the WJN

In 2015, Jewish Family Services launched programming to energize and engage children and families about the importance and joys of giving back. The JFS Kids Creating Community programs support local families in raising compassionate, aware and civic-minded kids committed to repairing the world and serving others. In March 2015, over 200 people attended the first annual JFS Kids Care Fair, an annual gala event and capstone of the yearlong programming.

The 2016 JFS Kids Care is coming soon and will be held on March 6, 2–5 p.m., at the Ann Arbor City Club at 1830 Washtenaw Avenue. The fun and enriching fair will engage children in hands-on service-learning activities, including but not limited to topics ranging from hunger prevention to valuing older adults, disability awareness and emergency preparedness. In addition to arts and crafts galore, the fair will incorporate fun physical activities emphasizing the importance of good self-care.

A wonderful variety of local groups and organizations (Jewish and other) will host activity stations at the 2016 fair. Activity partners include: American Red Cross, Ann Arbor Symphony, Ann Arbor Police Department, Beth Israel Congregation Madrichim, Elameno-Peace, First Congregational Church of Ann Arbor Youth Group, Greenhills Service Ninjas, Gym America, Hebrew Day School, JCC Camp Raanana, Jewish Federation Family Salon, Temple Beth Emeth-AARTY, University of Michigan Global Scholars Program, and more. JFS Executive Director Anya Abramzon said, "For me the most heartwarming element of the Kids Care Fair is the beautiful collaboration of so many Jewish and non-Jewish organizations, coming together to support a very important mission of raising the next generation of community activists, doers and leaders." The fair's tagline, "Because today's kids who care are tomorrow's leaders," reflects the long-term community benefits of service-learning for youth.

A generous grant awarded to JFS by the Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation Youth Council helps ensure that the March 6 event will not only be fantastic, but also that more event proceeds will reach the JFS Food Pantry and help to subsidize counseling for local families in need. JFS also appreciates the support of local corporate sponsors who contribute to the success of the event. Agencies, businesses or local organizations who would like to be an activity partner or corporate sponsor for the 2016 fair, can contact Sarah Hong at sarah.hong@jfsannarbor.org.

To learn more and to register your family for the JFS Kids Care Fair, visit www.jfsannarbor.org/kids-care-fair. . ■

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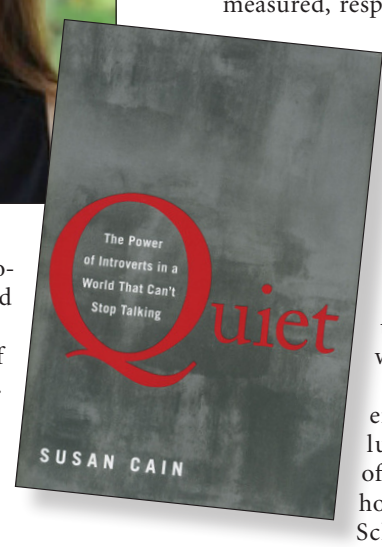
The Quiet Revolution

Rochel Urist, staff writer

Susan Cain is a natural storyteller. She's also a self-described introvert who is both brilliant and meticulous. Her 2010 book, *Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World That Can't Stop Talking*, sold at auction and garnered invitations to give Ted Talks, corporate consultations, and media interviews galore. It earned accolades from literary and intellectual cognoscenti. It has been translated into 36 languages.

Susan Cain



Quiet is an examination of the character traits of introverts. Cain takes care to distinguish introversion from shyness. Introverts may be quiet types who retreat from the limelight, but they are not necessarily shy or socially awkward. "Shyness," she says, "is the fear of social disapproval or humiliation, while introversion is a preference for environments that are not overstimulating. Shyness is inherently painful; introversion is not." The book is also a study of the hierarchical structure of personality styles, as constructed by our culture.

Cain's voice has gained purchase in many parts of the world-wide community. Googling her calls up many sites, including a lengthy Wikipedia page and a site devoted to her "quiet revolution." Her Ted talk, accessible online, has contributed to her stardom, and her advocacy of quiet, of renewed respect and consideration for introverts, has profited business, pedagogy, design, and countless other areas. Quotations from her book are cited in the manner of Oscar Wilde's aphorisms and Winston Churchill's witticisms. These citations are testament to the power of her ideas. Consider these samples:

> *"There's zero correlation between being the best talker and having the best ideas."*
>
> *"Don't think of introversion as something that needs to be cured."*
>
> *"We have two ears and one mouth and we should use them proportionally."*
>
> *"If you're an introvert, you might have overheard your parents apologize for your shyness. Or at school you might have been prodded to come 'out of your shell' —that noxious expression which fails to appreciate that some animals naturally carry shelter everywhere they go, and some humans are just the same."*

Seven years in the making, *Quiet* is eloquent and erudite. It draws on extensive scientific research along with personal experience and observations. It has been called a "page turner." That surprised me. I knew that Quiet was both personal and scholarly, but "page turner" is a phrase I associate with thrillers and suspenseful novels. Lo and behold, "page turner" proves an apt description of large portions of this book.

Charming and engaging, Cain's writing brings to bear her own history as a quiet, introspective person. She holds degrees from Princeton and Harvard Law School, though the cutthroat nature of law school triggered more than one bout of retching. Early in the book, she tells the story of another introvert, Laura, a fellow Harvard Law School graduate who, as a Wall Street negotiator, decimates her rivals. She does so in the soft-spoken, measured, respectful and enquiring way by which she learned to hide her nervousness. She disarms the opposition. After one particularly grueling win, her rivals' team asked her to join them. There is a surprise addendum to the Laura story, but I won't spoil it here.

Among the most entertaining and illuminating sections of *Quiet* is her look at how Harvard Business School (HBS) values extroverts over their quieter fellows. This tendency to under-appreciate the more thoughtful, measured, and analytical qualities associated with introverts was the spur to Cain's campaign. She exposes HBS, along with several other institutions in their short-sighted, reflexive reinforcement of this ethic. As Cain proves beyond any doubt, the quieter approach turns out to be more productive and profitable.

Some of the book's observations and personal anecdotes are funny, others sobering. Cain discusses, at length, the nationwide push for group efforts in schools, businesses, corporate settings, and many other institutions. She shows how children who prefer to work alone are often stigmatized, even though studies have shown that creativity favors solitude, not brainstorming. When classroom desks are set up in pods to enable children to work together, the most talented often feel beleaguered by the group setting. Likewise, office layouts that promote a sense of open community often inhibit introverts, whose contributions can be muted by such strategies.

Among the people she thanks are her husband, who grew up in Ann Arbor, and his parents, Barbara and Al Cain, who still live here in town. Cain also thanks her late grandfather, a rabbi in Brooklyn, New York, whom she credits with teaching her patience. She is the mother of two young children who will, no doubt, learn to appreciate their mom's sensitive encouragement of the quiet. ■

Sondheim on Sondheim

San Slomovits, staff writer

The Encore Theatre in Dexter will present *Sondheim on Sondheim* from February 4-21. *Sondheim on Sondheim* is a musical revue consisting of music and lyrics written by Stephen Sondheim for his many shows. Conceived by James Lapine, who collaborated with Sondheim on a number of his Broadway hits, (beginning with *Sunday in the Park With George* in 1984) it includes video and audio narration by Sondheim. It was first produced on Broadway in 2010, with Lapine directing. The show includes songs from nearly every stage of Sondheim's career, including *West Side Story, Gypsy, A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum, Company, Follies, A Little Night Music, Sweeney Todd, Into the Woods,* and more.

Sondheim, who will be 86 years old in March of this year, is widely acknowledged to be one of the greatest composers for American musical theater. His career spans nearly six decades, from the *West Side Story* in 1957, for which he wrote the lyrics, to the 2014 movie adaptation of his 1987 Broadway hit, *Into the Woods*. Sondheim has won eight Tony awards, more than any other composer, including a Special Tony Award for Lifetime Achievement in the Theatre. He has also won a Pulitzer Prize, an Academy award, eight Grammy Awards, and a 2015 Presidential Medal of Freedom.

We recently talked about the Encore's upcoming production of *Sondheim on Sondheim* with Thalia Schramm, who will be one of the singers in the show. Schramm, who has acted in over twenty productions at the Encore ever since it opened in 2009, and has also served as its associate artistic director, now works there as casting director and program director.

WJN: *Sondheim on Sondheim* is the second of two Sondheim revues. Can you talk about the differences between *Side by Side* and *Sondheim on Sondheim*.

Schramm: *Sondheim on Sondheim* is the newest of the revues – and there is actually another one as well: (*Putting It Together*). *Sondheim on Sondheim* is different from the others in that Stephen Sondheim actually narrates portions of it, and explains why he wrote songs and shows. This show also includes many songs that have been cut from shows, or moved to different shows and have re-worked lyrics – it's really interesting to see the different drafts that shows have gone through!

WJN: The original Broadway production of *Sondheim on Sondheim* featured videos and audio clips of him discussing his work. Will your production also include those?

Schramm: Yes! You receive all the videos and sound clips of Sondheim himself when you receive your scripts, and we'll be using them all.

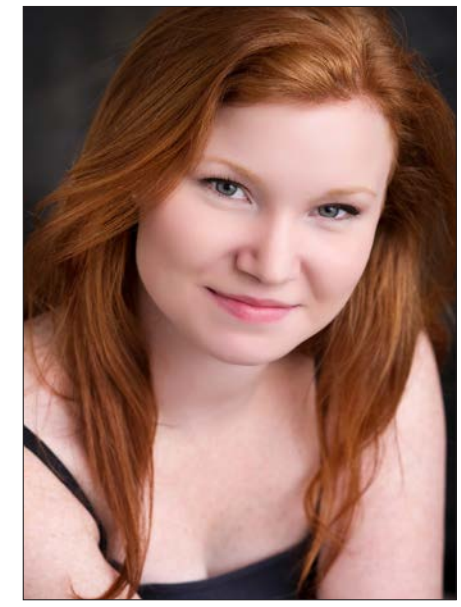
WJN: *Side by Side* had a narrator and was organized around themes in Sondheim's work. Is *Sondheim on Sondheim* also like that, or is it more chronological?

Schramm: It's not necessarily chronological, but it's arranged in an important order to Sondheim. It goes through his early life; he explains his relationship with Oscar Hammerstein, and James Lapine; and important shows throughout his career.

WJN: What are the challenges and advantages of producing a plot-less review versus a musical with a story?

Schramm: I think that because Sondheim sets up the show as being his life story, the show makes sense plot-wise; and the wonderful thing about Sondheim material is that each song has such a rich story imbedded in it. Each song stands on its own as an amazing piece of material.

WJN: Jessica Grove *(Sondheim on Sondheim's*



Thalia Shram

director, and Encore co-founder, Dan Cooney's wife) has performed in several Sondheim shows on Broadway. Will her memories and experiences of those productions inform this one?

Schramm: Yes, Jessica was in *A Little Night Music* and *Sunday in the Park with George*. She also just did *Into the Woods* with The Encore this past summer. So, though she doesn't have direct experience with *Sondheim on Sondheim*, she and Dan have a lot of Sondheim experience!

WJN: How big will your pit band be and who is music directing the revue?

Schramm: Tyler Driskill is our music director, and he is also our sole musician on a grand piano on stage. He has music directed many shows with us, and also accompanies for The University of Michigan School of Music, Theatre, and Dance.

WJN: Despite the premise of *Something Rotten*, (the current Broadway hit comedy about musicals having originated in Shakespeare's time) musicals are not that old an art form compared to traditional theater. So, there haven't been as many creators of musicals as of plays. What do you think is Sondheim's place in American musical theater?

Schramm: I personally think that he is the most relevant modern musical theatre composer. I love the classics as well (Rogers and Hammerstein, Berlin, Porter, Lerner and Lowe, etc.), but I feel like Sondheim has such an amazing ability to transform feelings and experience into song. I think singing is such a vulnerable and real place to explore, and the way Sondheim matches a melody to an emotion us absolutely magical. ■

Sondheim on Sondheim *opens at Dexter's Encore Theatre on February 4 and continues through February 21. For info and tickets, visit theencoretheatre.org or call 268-6200.*

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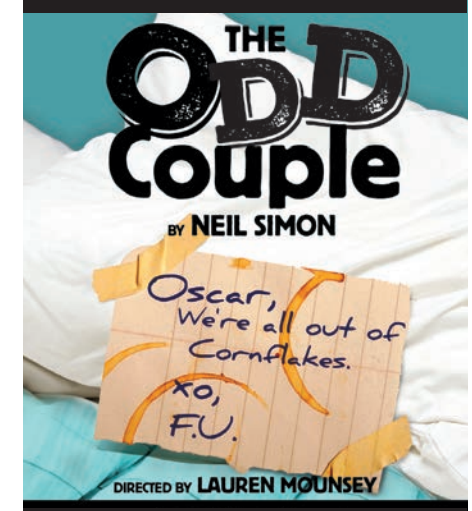

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New-ish Jewish Food for Shabbat

Mary Bilyeu, staff writer

Babka is ready for its close-up. Nine of the loaves achieved supermodel status by making the cover of *Food & Wine* magazine's January issue, a prime location from which their luscious swirls seduced readers.

Michael Solomonov's Zahav: *A World of Israeli Cooking* and Yotam Ottolenghi's *NOPI: The Cookbook* were awarded coveted slots on many food writers' annual "best of" lists at the end of last year.

The Forward has recently told us about creative mash-ups incorporating traditional Jewish foods: Kung Pao pastrami or matzah ball ramen, anyone? And Haaretz has written about the rise of Israeli chefs, such as Einat Admony in New York City and Alon Shaya in New Orleans, who make contemporary but classic dishes that go far beyond hummus (while still celebrating hummus, of course).

Michael Wex, author of several books including *Born to Kvetch* and *Just Say Nu*, will publish *Rhapsody in Schmaltz: Yiddish Food and Why We Can't Stop Eating It* in April. And Amazon is offering a half-dozen new Jewish cookbooks due to be published in 2016, including one that applies the laws of kashrut to the latest fad diets: *The New Yiddish Kitchen: Gluten-Free and Paleo Kosher Recipes for the Holidays and Every Day* by Jennifer Robins and Simone Miller.

I'm all *verklempt*: Jewish food is trendy. And New-ish Jewish food is an even bigger star.

Ashkenazic or Sephardic, old-fashioned or new-fangled, everything from deli sandwiches schmeared with zhug to rugelach filled with salted caramel is part of the New-ish Jewish cuisine.

Rather than suppressing their culinary history, as so many earlier generations did in an effort to assimilate, Gen X-ers and the Millennials are embracing the foods of their heritage and are bringing them into the 21st century. Having grown up with global influences and interactions, with concern for food sourcing, and with an appreciation for hand-crafting and personalizing everything from beer to charcuterie,

instead of rejecting the Old World traditions what this group rejects is limitations.

Defying, rather than defining, boundaries, contemporary Jewish cooking welcomes new foods, new flavors, and new fans into the tent. There is no Jewish law, after all, mandating that kreplach can only be filled with meat and not with collard greens, for example. But this assimilation of tastes and traditions is really nothing new, is it? Jews have been migrating, emigrating, immigrating, and then adopting ingredients for millennia.

Not all of the new food is kosher, admittedly, any more than the Reuben sandwich is. Wise Sons Deli in San Francisco offers the Big Macher: a burger of ground beef and pastrami served on a challah roll that's topped with onion, relish, Russian dressing and cheddar cheese. But the flavors and the feelings associated with Jewish food are all still there.

Finally, we get to be the cool kids, the trendy ones. So for a wintry Shabbat dinner, let's offer some tradition with a twist and serve a meal of familiar dishes spun a little differently.

In *The New Kosher: Simple Recipes to Savor and Share*, New York City-based cooking instructor Kim Kushner combines fresh ingredients, uncomplicated cooking techniques, her mother's Moroccan culinary traditions, and influences from having been raised Modern Orthodox in Montreal and Israel to create dishes with worldwide flavors. Her slow-cooked steaks sweetened with a hint of date syrup are an easy entree to fix and forget, ready to serve without a lot of fuss and last-minute work.

Tal Ronnen, born in Israel and raised primarily in the United States, is reinventing Americans' notions of vegan cuisine with creative combinations and inspired influence from Mediterranean and Middle Eastern cooking traditions. Fresh, crisp Brussels sprouts tossed with exotic za'atar - from the cookbook featuring recipes served at his Los Angeles restaurant, Crossroads—are an excellent accompaniment to the beef.

And to round out the meal, try a Southern-style pound cake topped with a vanilla glaze to make it even more special. This is a honey cake, but not your bubbe's version. Instead, it comes from *Something Sweet: Desserts, Baked Goods, and Treats for Every Occasion* by Miriam Pascal, a self-taught baker who has been dubbed "the queen of kosher desserts."

New-ish Jewish food - the hot new trend for 2016.

It's *haymish* with a dose of *chutzpah*. ■

Honey Sour Cream Pound Cake

Many people think that honey cake is just for Rosh Hashanah," says Miriam Pascal. But "this delicious and easy cake"—which has "the most amazing, dense, and moist texture" - deserves to make regular appearances throughout the year.

1 cup oil
½ cup sugar
½ cup brown sugar
5 eggs
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1-½ teaspoons baking powder
½ teaspoon salt
1 cup honey
½ cup sour cream or soy sour cream
2 cups flour

Preheat oven to 325°. Grease and flour a standard (12-cup) bundt pan; set aside.

In the bowl of an electric mixer on medium speed, combine oil and sugars; beat until smooth. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well to combine after each addition. Add vanilla, cinnamon, baking powder, and salt. Beat to combine. Add honey and sour cream, beating well until incorporated. (It may still have visible flecks of sour cream.)

Reduce mixer speed to low; add flour, half at a time, beating to incorporate after each addition. Do not overmix.

Pour batter into prepared pan; bake for about 1 hour, until a tester inserted into the center comes out clean. Allow cake to cool for 10 to 15 minutes before removing from pan. Set aside to cool fully before glazing.

Vanilla Glaze

1 cup powdered sugar
1 tablespoon light corn syrup or honey
1 tablespoon milk or soy milk
½ teaspoon vanilla extract

Combine all ingredients in a small bowl. Whisk until smooth.

Yield: 12 to 15 servings.

Source: Miriam Pascal, *Something Sweet: Desserts, Baked Goods, and Treats for Every Occasion*of"

The Kids' Steaks

Kim Kushner calls these "kids' steaks" because her children enjoy them so much, but says that "adults are crazy for them," as well. "The meat comes out delicious and as soft as butter."

6 small boneless rib-eye steaks, about 3 pounds total weight
Kosher salt and freshly ground pepper
3 tablespoons ketchup or tomato paste
3 tablespoons soy sauce
2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
1 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce
1 tablespoon date syrup
1 teaspoon dried oregano
3 tablespoons water

Place the steaks in a single layer in one large or two medium rectangular baking dishes. Season them generously with salt and pepper.

In a small bowl, whisk together the soy sauce, ketchup, vinegar, Worcestershire sauce, date syrup, oregano, and water until thoroughly blended; pour the mixture over the steaks. You can cook the steaks right away or you can cover the dish(es) and marinate them in the refrigerator for up to 24 hours.

Preheat the oven to 275°.

Cover the baking dish(es) with aluminum foil, place in the oven, and cook for 4 hours. Remove from the oven, turn the steaks over, and raise the oven temperature to 325°F. Cook the steaks, uncovered, for 1 hour longer. The meat should be extremely tender and easy to cut with a fork, and the sauce should be deep brown and slightly thickened.

Yield: 6 servings.

Source: Adapted from Kim Kushner, *The New Kosher: Simple Recipes to Savor and Share*

Shaved Brussels Sprouts with Za'atar, Lemon, and Pine Nuts

"People often cook Brussels sprouts until they are a mushy, bitter mess," says Tal Ronnen. "When shaved raw," however, they are "an entirely different beast. Delicate and hearty at the same time, this is one of those make-ahead salads where the flavors get even better if it is allowed to stand."

1 pound Brussels sprouts, tough outer leaves discarded and stem ends trimmed
4 baby rainbow carrots
Finely grated zest and juice of 2 lemons
1 tablespoon za'atar
3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
¼ cup pine nuts, toasted

Prepare an ice bath by filling a large bowl halfway with water and adding a tray of ice cubes.

Using a mandoline or a very sharp knife, slice the Brussels sprouts and carrots as thin as possible. Put them in the ice bath for 5 minutes to crisp them up.

Drain the sprouts and carrots and dry well in a salad spinner, or drain in a colander and pat dry. Transfer to a mixing bowl. Add the lemon zest and juice, za'atar, and oil; season with salt and pepper, and toss with your hands to coat. Sprinkle in the pine nuts and toss again to combine.

If you have time, allow the salad to stand for 15 minutes or more.

Yield: 4 servings.

Source: Adapted from Tal Ronnen, *Crossroads: Extraordinary Recipes from the Restaurant That Is Reinventing Vegan Cuisine*

Calendar

February 2016

Monday 1

KidZone Vacation Day: JCC. KidZone Vacation Days provide fun and adventure for children in K-5 when Ann Arbor Schools and Hebrew Day School have scheduled closures. Children hang out in the new KidZone Lounge, complete with computers, games, and a reading area; have arts and crafts time; play sports; and watch a kid-friendly movie. For information including pricing or to register, visit www.jccannarbor.org, contact tamaralewis@jccannarbor.org or phone 971-0990. 9 a.m.–4 p.m.

Shalom Gever: TBE. 4:15–7 p.m.

Nachamu Training Session: TBE. 7–9 p.m.

Tuesday 2

The Jewish Course of Why: Chabad. This Jewish Learning Institute (JLI) course spans a diverse range of topics, from fun, light, and off-the-beaten-track questions, to more complex and controversial issues. Some of the course's 50 questions include: Why are there so many Jews in Hollywood? Why do Jews eat *gefilte* fish and *cholent* and wish each other *mazal tov* and *l'chaim?* Why does the Bible sanction slavery and animal sacrifices? What is the cause of anti-Semitism? What does Judaism say about Christianity and about the role of women in Jewish life? The course will also offer insight into mysterious Jewish practices, strange biblical narratives, and enigmas of Jewish identity. 9:30 a.m. and 7:30 p.m.

***Yidish Tish* (Yiddish Conversational Group):** Beanster's Café in UM Michigan League. 1:30 p.m. *Tuesdays.*

Shalom Gever: TBE. 4:15–5:45 p.m.

Group Spirituality Exploration: TBE. 6–7:30 p.m.

Centennial Museum Opening Reception: BIC. (Museum open from February 2–9). 8 p.m.

Tea and Torah on Tuesday—for Women: Chabad. 8 p.m. *Tuesdays.*

Wednesday 3

Lunch and Learn: BIC. Noon.

Group Spirituality Exploration: TBE. 12:30–2 p.m.

Mahj: TBE. Off-site. 1–3 p.m.

"The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Lost Scriptures of Early Judaism:" Frankel Institute. Presented by Eva Mroczek as part of the West Bloomfield Lecture Series on Wrestling with Angels: The Struggle Between Sacred and Secular in Jewish Life. JCC West Bloomfield, 6600 West Maple Road, West Bloomfield. For information, see www.lsa.umich.edu/judaic/news-events/all-events.html. 7 p.m.

Healthy Lifestyles: Jewish Women's Circle. With Vicki Brett-Gach, Vegan Lifestyle Coach, educator and Certified Personal Chef. At the home of Esther Goldstein. $10 donation requested. Spaces are limited. To RSVP, email esther@jewmich.com. 7:30 p.m.

Thursday 4

Yoga with Shlomit: TBE. Noon–1:15 p.m.

Jewish Mindfulness Meditation Sit: TBE. 1:15–2 p.m.

Midrash in Hebrew Class: BIC. 1:30 p.m.

Talmud–Jewish Civil Law: Chabad. Sharpen your wits and knowledge of the Jewish legal system by following the intriguing discussions in the Talmud. The Talmud is a composite of practical law, logical argumentation and moral teachings. Study from the original Talmud tractate. 8 p.m. *Thursdays.*

Friday 5

Lunch and Learn: TBE. 12:30–1:30 p.m.

Shalom Gever: TBE. 3:30–5:45 p.m.

Winter Kallah: TBE NFTY. Starts at 5:30 p.m. Dinner at 5:45 p.m. and lasts until Sunday at 10 a.m.

Family Shabbat Services: TBE. Tot Shabbat from 5:45–6:15 p.m. Sukkat Shalom from 5:45–6:15 p.m. Tot Shabbat Dinner from 6:15–6:45 p.m. Shira from 6:45–7:15 p.m. Pre-Service Reception from 6:45–7:45 p.m. Shabbat Service from 7:30–9 p.m.

First Friday Shabbat: JCS. Once a month gathering to welcome Shabbat with songs, candle lighting, wine and challah. Followed by a short thematic program in which members of the congregation offer their thoughts. Children always welcome. Held in the JCC lounges. Dinner is $10 per person or $25 for a family of four. RSVP online at www.jewishcultural society.org. Begins at 6:30 p.m.

Friday evening services: *See listing at the end of the calendar.*

Saturday 6

Winter Kallah: TBE NFTY. All day until Sunday at 10 a.m.

Torah Study: TBE. 8:50–9:50 a.m.

Hebrew in Ivrit: TBE. 9:30–10:30 a.m.

Chapel Service: TBE. 10–11:00 a.m.

Shabbat services: *See listing at the end of the calendar.*

Sunday 7

Gan Katan: BIC. 9:30 a.m.

World Wide Wrap: BIC. 9:30 a.m.

Social Action Committee Meeting: BIC. 10:30 a.m.

Tanya–Jewish Mysticism: Chabad. Delve into the basic text of Chassidim and discover the beauty and depth of Judaism. 10:30–11:30 a.m.

The Three B's: Bernstein, Berlin and Blickstein: JCC. Sunday morning brunch with the Ann Arbor Opera. The talented Shawn McDonald and Ann Arbor Opera members will perform pieces of these great Jewish composers. Brunch served from 11–11:30 a.m., followed by a concert. Cost is $5. RSVP recommended by phone at 971-0990 or email karenfreedland@jccannarbor.org. 11 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

Monday 8

Shalom Gever: TBE. 4:15–7 p.m.

Men's Torah Study: TBE. 7–8:30 p.m.

Women's Torah Study: TBE. 7–8:30 p.m.

Tuesday 9

The Jewish Course of Why: Chabad. 9:30 a.m. and 7:30 p.m. *See February 2.*

***Yidish Tish* (Yiddish Conversational Group):** Beanster's Café in UM Michigan League. 1:30 p.m. *Tuesdays.*

Shalom Gever: TBE. 4:15–5:45 p.m.

Spirituality Book Club: TBE. 7:30–8:30 p.m.

Tea and Torah on Tuesday—for Women: Chabad. 8 p.m. *Tuesdays.*

Wednesday 10

Lunch and Learn: BIC. Noon.

"Two Vultures: Freud Between 'Jewish Science' and Humanism:" Frankel Institute. Presented by Frankel Institute Fellow Scott Spector as part of the West Bloomfield Lecture Series on Wrestling with Angels: The Struggle Between Sacred and Secular in Jewish Life. JCC West Bloomfield, 6600 West Maple Road, West Bloomfield. For information, see www.lsa.umich.edu/judaic/ news-events/all-events.html. 7 p.m.

Thursday 11

Yoga with Shlomit: TBE. Noon–1:15 p.m.

Spirituality Book Club: TBE. Noon–1 p.m.

Jewish Mindfulness Meditation Sit: TBE. 1:15–2 p.m.

Midrash in Hebrew Class: BIC. 1:30 p.m.

Talmud–Jewish Civil Law: Chabad. 8 p.m. *See first Thursday of month.*

Friday 12

KidZone Vacation Day: JCC. KidZone Vacation Days provide fun and adventure for children in K-5 when Ann Arbor Schools and Hebrew Day School have scheduled closures. Children hang out in the new KidZone Lounge, complete with computers, games, and a reading area; have arts and crafts time; play sports; and watch a kid-friendly movie. For information including pricing or to register, visit www.jccannarbor.org, contact tamaralewis@jccannarbor.org or phone 971-0990. 9 a.m.–4 p.m.

Lunch and Learn: TBE. 12:30–1:30 p.m.

Shalom Gever: TBE. 3:30–5:45 p.m.

Family Shabbat Services: TBE. Tot Shabbat from 5:45–6:15 p.m. Sukkat Shalom from 5:45–6:15 p.m. Tot Shabbat Dinner from 6:15–6:45 p.m. Shira from 6:45–7:15 p.m. Pre-Service Reception from 6:45–7:45 p.m. Shabbat Service from 7:30–9 p.m.

Friday evening services: *See listing at end of calendar.*

Saturday 13

Torah Study: TBE. 8:50–9:50 a.m.

Shabbat Limmud: BIC. 9:30 a.m.

Hebrew in Ivrit: TBE. 9:30–10:30 a.m.

Bat Mitzvah Service: TBE. 10–11:30 a.m.

Tot Shabbat: BIC. 11:15 a.m.

Shabbat Service: AARC. Participative community service integrating traditional liturgy with music, chanting and contemporary English readings. Includes Torah service and discussion.

Shabbat services: *See listing at the end of the calendar.*

Sunday 14

Men's Club Planning Session: BIC. 9:30 a.m.

Tanya–Jewish Mysticism: Chabad. Delve into the basic text of Chassidim and discover the beauty and depth of Judaism. 10:30–11:30 a.m.

Rishonim: TBE. Off-site. Noon–2 p.m.

Shir Chadash: TBE. 5–6 p.m.

Kol Halev: TBE. 6:15–7:45 p.m.

Monday 15

KidZone Vacation Day: JCC. KidZone Vacation Days provide fun and adventure for children in K-5 when Ann Arbor Schools and Hebrew Day School have scheduled closures. Children hang out in the new KidZone Lounge, complete with computers, games, and a reading area; have arts and crafts time; play sports; and watch a kid-friendly movie. For information including pricing or to register, visit www.jccannarbor.org, contact tamaralewis@jccannarbor.org or phone 971-0990. 9 a.m.–4 p.m. *Through February 19.*

Shalom Gever: TBE. 4:15–7 p.m.

Tuesday 16

KidZone Vacation Day: JCC. *See February 15.*

The Jewish Course of Why: Chabad. 9:30 a.m. and 7:30 p.m. *See February 2.*

***Yidish Tish* (Yiddish Conversational Group):** Beanster's Café in UM Michigan League. 1:30 p.m.

Shalom Gever: TBE. 4:15–5:45 p.m.

Tea and Torah on Tuesday—for Women: Chabad. 8 p.m. *Tuesdays.*

Wednesday 17

KidZone Vacation Day: JCC. *See February 15.*

Lunch and Learn: BIC. Noon.

Mahj: TBE. Off-site. 1–3 p.m.

"Freedom Seders and Matzohs of Hope: Ritual and Politics in the American Movement for Soviet Jews:" Frankel Institute. Presented by Frankel Institute Fellow Shaul Kelner as part of the West Bloomfield Lecture Series on Wrestling with Angels: The Struggle Between Sacred and Secular in Jewish Life. JCC West Bloomfield, 6600 West Maple Road, West Bloomfield. For information, see www.lsa.umich.edu/judaic/ news-events/all-events.html. 7 p.m.

Thursday 18

KidZone Vacation Day: JCC. *See February 15.*

Yoga with Shlomit: TBE. Noon–1:15 p.m.

Piano Concert: JCC. Enjoy a variety of music from classical to modern performed by the J's own Deborah Ryan. Ryan has played competitively for 12 years, including placing at the Flint Institute of Music and Oakland University. 1–2 p.m.

Jewish Mindfulness Meditation Sit: TBE. 1:15–2 p.m.

Midrash in Hebrew Class: BIC. 1:30 p.m.

[E]Met: An Honest Conversation about Death: TBE. 7–9 p.m.

Talmud–Jewish Civil Law: Chabad. 8 p.m. *See first Thursday of the month.*

Friday 19

KidZone Vacation Day: JCC. *See February 15.*

Lunch and Learn: TBE. 12:30–1:30 p.m.

Shalom Gever: TBE. 3:30–5:45 p.m.

Carlebach & Chicken Soup Friday Night Service and Dinner: BIC. 6 p.m.

Family Shabbat Services: TBE. Tot Shabbat from 5:45–6:15 p.m. Sukkat Shalom from 5:45–6:15 p.m. Tot Shabbat Dinner from 6:15–6:45 p.m. Shira from 6:45–7:15 p.m. Pre-Service Reception from 6:45–7:45 p.m. Shabbat Service from 7:30–9 p.m.

Friday evening services: *See listing at the end of the calendar.*

Saturday 20

Torah Study: TBE. 8:50–9:50 a.m.

Hebrew in Ivrit: TBE. 9:30–10:30 a.m.

Chapel Service: TBE. 10–11 a.m.

Shabbat services: *See listing at the end of the calendar.*

Sunday 21

Tanya–Jewish Mysticism: Chabad. Delve into the basic text of Chassidim and discover the beauty and depth of Judaism. 10:30–11:30 a.m.

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Calendar

Book Club Meeting: JCS. The group will discuss the book, *Emma Lazarus,* by Esther Schor. Noon–2 p.m.

Shir Chadash: TBE. 5–6 p.m.

Kol Halev: TBE. 6:15–7:45 p.m.

Monday 22

Shalom Gever: TBE. 4:15–7 p.m.

Men's Torah Study: TBE. 7–8:30 p.m.

Women's Torah Study: TBE. 7–8:30 p.m.

Tuesday 23

The Jewish Course of Why: Chabad. 9:30 a.m. and 7:30 p.m. *See February 2.*

***Yidish Tish* (Yiddish Conversational Group):** Beanster's Café in UM Michigan League. 1:30 p.m.

Shalom Gever: TBE. 4:15–5:45 p.m.

Tea and Torah on Tuesday—for Women: Chabad. 8 p.m. *Tuesdays.*

Wednesday 24

Lunch and Learn: BIC. Noon.

"Two Vultures: Freud Between 'Jewish Science' and Humanism:" Frankel Institute. Presented by Frankel Institute Fellow Geneviéve Zubryzycki as part of the West Bloomfield Lecture Series on Wrestling with Angels: The Struggle Between Sacred and Secular in Jewish Life. JCC West Bloomfield, 6600 West Maple Road, West Bloomfield. For information, see www.lsa.umich.edu/judaic/news-events/all-events.html. 7 p.m.

Thursday 25

Yoga with Shlomit: TBE. Noon–1:15 p.m.

"The Timeless and the Timely: Sacralizing Political Activism in the Campaign for Soviet Jewry:" Frankel Institute. Institute Colloquium presented by Frankel Institute Fellow Shaul Kelner. 202 South Thayer Street, Room 2022. 12:15 p.m.

Dr. John Seeley and the Citizens' Climate Lobby: JCC. Dr. Seeley will speak about the Citizens' Climate Lobby, a national, nonpartisan, grassroots organization with an Ann Arbor Chapter. For information, phone Rachael at 971-0990 or email rachaelhoffenblum@jccannarbor.org. 1–2 p.m.

Jewish Mindfulness Meditation Sit: TBE. 1:15–2 p.m.

Midrash in Hebrew Class: BIC. 1:30 p.m.

Guys Night Out: TBE Brotherhood. Off-site @ Grizzly Peak. 6–8 p.m.

Talmud–Jewish Civil Law: Chabad. 8 p.m. *See first Thursday of the month.*

Friday 26

Lunch and Learn: TBE. 12:30–1:30 p.m.

Shalom Gever: TBE. 3:30–5:45 p.m.

Family Shabbat Services: TBE. Tot Shabbat from 5:45–6:15 p.m. Sukkat Shalom from 5:45–6:15 p.m. Tot Shabbat Dinner from 6:15–6:45 p.m. Shira from 6:45–7:15 p.m. Pre-Service Reception from 6:45–7:45 p.m. Shabbat Service from 7:30–9 p.m.

Pre-Fourth Friday Services: AARC. Bring young children for singing and fun with Rabbi Alana Alpert or another service leader. Pizza served. Childcare provided during services that follow, with advance notice. At the JCC. 5:45–6:15 p.m.

Fourth Friday Shabbat Service and Potluck Dinner: AARC. Musical Kabbalat Shabbat Services led by Rabbi Alana Alpert. Followed by vegetarian potluck dinner. Open to all community members. Pizza nosh for children and childcare provided during services from 6:15–8 p.m. Reservations requested for pizza and childcare. For info, call 445-1910 or email info@aarecon.org. At the JCC. 6:30–10 p.m.

Friday evening services: *See listing at the end of the calendar.*

Saturday 27

Torah Study: TBE. 8:50–9:50 a.m.

Sixth Grade Shabbat Morning with the Rabbis: BIC. 9 a.m.

Henry Gershowitz Memorial Shabbat: BIC. 9:30 a.m.

Hebrew in Ivrit: TBE. 9:30–10:30 a.m.

Chapel Service: TBE. 10–11 a.m.

Tot Shabbat: BIC. 11:15 a.m.

Shabbat services: *See listing at the end of the calendar.*

Sunday 28

Tanya–Jewish Mysticism: Chabad. Delve into the basic text of Chassidim and discover the beauty and depth of Judaism. 10:30–11:30 a.m.

Writing Memoirs and Family Stories: JCS. For more information, see jewishculturalsociety.org. At the JCC. Noon–2 p.m.

Camp Tavor Open House: For information or to RSVP, call 883-1422. 2–4 p.m.

Shir Chadash: TBE. 5–6 p.m.

High School Shir Chadash Café: TBE. 7:30–9 p.m.

Kol Halev: TBE. 6:15–7:45 p.m.

Motown@LIVE: BIC. Women's League. 6:30 p.m.

Monday 29

Shalom Gever: TBE. 4:15–7 p.m.

Weekly Friday night Shabbat services

Shabbat Service: AAOM. Services held at UM Hillel. Call 994-9258 in advance to confirm time.

Shabbat Service: BIC. 6 p.m.

Shabbat Service: TBE. Tot Shabbat at 6 p.m., followed by tot dinner. Traditional Service at 7:30 p.m. Once a month Middle School Service at 7:30 p.m. For information, call 665-4744.

Shabbat Service: Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Congregation. 6:15 p.m. at the JCC the fourth Friday each month. Musical Shabbat service followed by vegetarian potluck. Pizza nosh for the kids at 6:00 p.m. Childcare provided during the service. All are welcome to attend. For information, call 975-6527, email mamacohen@comcast.net, or visit www.aarecon.org.

Shabbat Service: Chabad. Begins at candle-lighting time. Home hospitality available for Shabbat meals and Jewish holidays. Call 995-3276 in advance.

Weekly Shabbat services

Shabbat Services: AAOM. Morning service, 9:30 a.m. Evening service, 35 minutes before sunset. Call 662-5805 for information. Mincha/Ma'ariv with Seudah Shlisheet and Dvar Torah every week. Torah topics and a bite to eat. Discussions led by Rabbi Rod Glogower and other local scholars. Home hospitality available for Shabbat meals. UM Hillel.

Shabbat Services: BIC. 9:30 a.m. Morning childcare from 10 a.m.–12:15 p.m.

Shabbat Services: AA Reconstructionist Congregation. Morning services held the second Saturday of each month at the JCC from 10 a.m.–noon integrating traditional liturgy with music, chanting and contemporary readings including Torah service and discussion. A morning of songs and text study takes place the first Saturday of each month. For info, email info@aarecon.org or call 913-9705 or visit www.aarecon.org.

Shabbat Services: Chabad. Friday night services at Shabbat candle lighting time. Saturday morning services at 9:45 a.m. Afternoon services 45 minutes before sundown. Call 995-3276 for Home Hospitality and Meals for Shabbat and Jewish Holidays.

Shabbat Services: Pardes Hannah. Generally meets the 2nd and 4th Saturdays of each month. Call 663-4039 for more information. 10 a.m. Led by Rabbi Elliot Ginsburg.

Shabbat Services: TBE. Torah Study with Rabbi Levy at 8:50 a.m. Morning Minyan with Rabbi Delson and lay leaders at 9:30 a.m. Sanctuary Service at 10 a.m. most weeks. Call the office at 665-4744 or consult website at www.templebethemeth.org for service details.

Home Hospitality for Shabbat and Holiday Meals: AAOM. Call 662-5805 in advance.

Home Hospitality and Meals: Chabad. Every Shabbat and Holiday. Call 995-3276 in advance.

Phone numbers and addresses of organizations frequently listed in the calendar:

Ann Arbor Orthodox Minyan (AAOM)
1429 Hill Street 994-5822

Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Congregation (AARC)
2935 Birch Hollow Drive 913-9705

Beth Israel Congregation (BIC)
2000 Washtenaw Ave. 665-9897

Chabad House
715 Hill Street 995-3276

Jewish Community Center (JCC)
2935 Birch Hollow Drive 971-0990

Jewish Cultural Society (JCS)
2935 Birch Hollow Drive 975-9872

Jewish Family Services (JFS)
2245 South State Street 769-0209

Jewish Federation
2939 Birch Hollow Drive 677-0100

Pardes Hannah
2010 Washtenaw Ave. 761-5324

Temple Beth Emeth (TBE)
2309 Packard Road 665-4744

UM Hillel
1429 Hill Street 769-0500

Shabbat Candlelighting

February 5	5:33 p.m.
February 12	5:42 p.m.
February 19	5:51 p.m.
February 26	6 p.m.

Hassidic funk band Zusha on a mission to transcend labels

By Maayan Jaffe-Hoffman/JNS.org

There's no one label for the deep, spiritual, funky, fun, and eclectic tunes of one of the hottest new Hassidic funk bands, Zusha.

"What are we? What are you?" asks band member and guitarist Zachary Goldschmiedt, 24, over coffee in Jerusalem with this reporter. Sitting with percussionist Elisha Mlotek, 25, and vocalist Shlomo Gaisin, 24, the latter sipping a berry smoothie with a shot of hot pepper, the members of the New York-based band spoke about music, religion, and life.

"The only assumption we make about people is that they are all beautiful and they all have something to teach us. Who are we? We are listeners. We are Jewish," Goldschmiedt tells JNS.org. "Labels make us uncomfortable."

Yes, they're Jewish and Orthodox, with long beards and soulful eyes, but that's where the labels stop. Zusha's music is tough to define. Some call it hipster, others dub it Hassidic soul. It's probably a combination of both of those genres, with a little Rabbi Shlomo Carlebach and Yosef Karduner thrown in for good measure.

The band is in the midst of an international tour, celebrating its latest and second album, "Kavana," which means intention in Hebrew. The album came out Jan. 6. On the cover is a tzadik (righteous person) eating.

"How do you take something as mundane as eating and turn it into a spiritual experience? You can," says Goldschmiedt. "We find ourselves all over the place—the airport, the subway, taxi cabs—and part of our avodah (work) is to make those moments as meaningful as we can through song. We find ourselves singing a lot."

Zusha, which is an acronym for the band members' Hebrew names—zayin or Z for Zacharia, shin or S for Shlomo, and alef or A for Elisha, while the vav or U is a connector—put out its first album in October 2014. The members met in 2013 in New York City and started jamming around town, including gigs at and near New York University, where Goldschmiedt studied. After playing just for fun for a while, they decided to make it official. At that point, they had enough of a following that their first album, named for the band, was a success. It led to shows in the U.S. and Israel.

Their target audience: anyone with an open heart, says Gaisin.

"We've encountered some really special people at our shows that want to be part of this spiritual revolution," says Mlotek. "People are running after meaning, Jews are running back to their roots, searching for a meaningful existence.… People are thirsty and hungry for nothing short of the real thing."

PHOTO CREDIT: SHIMMY SOCOL.

From left to right, Elisha Mlotek, Shlomo Gaisin, and Zachary Goldschmiedt of the Hassidic funk band Zusha.

Zusha is ready to give it to them. Mlotek says many people, even those who live religiously observant lives, live them almost robotically. "That becomes dangerous," he says. The band, Mlotek continues, is trying to "wave a flag and bring spirituality and connection back to the forefront."

Even the name Zusha is wrapped in a spiritual cloak. Mlotek explains how the Hassidic master Zusha spread a message of simplicity and joy, and that's the band's message, too.

Zusha's shows can take on many forms. In the fall of 2015, Zusha played at the popular Yellow Submarine venue in Jerusalem to a crowd of hundreds of American yeshiva and seminary students. With lighters in the air and screams of delight, the young adults begged for more as they danced in any available open spaces, which were few and far between. At other times, Zusha puts on quieter, more intimate shows—mostly private appearances. Mlotek says he is not nervous when he performs since he doesn't view it as a production, but rather as prayer.

The band members also enjoy recording their albums. They have a devout Christian producer who adds another layer of spirituality to the music.

"It adds another authentic perspective," says Mlotek. "He bolsters the music with his rich soul."

For Gaisin, recording is about an exercise in free choice. Every addition or subtraction changes the band's sound, and the end results fascinate him.

"Every layer of sound can either block the real us or bring out more of the real us," Gaisin says.

While on the surface, the band members look similar to each other, they don't share many philosophical, religious, or political opinions. They say this contributes to their diversity of sound and the dynamism of their music.

"We don't have to be the same, yet we are all together," Gaisin says.

How long will it last? Like any young band members, they have high hopes. Yet Goldschmiedt says he is already struggling with his career choice. He says he recognizes the challenges of being a Jewish, let alone Hassidic, band member who wants to form a family.

"Unlike rock 'n' roll superstars, for us, number one is to have a nice place to call home and to raise a family with children. Then there's this other goal to change the world through music. The hard thing is how do those things line up?" Goldschmiedt says. "Sometimes it is like wearing two different hats without a lot of role models."

Goldschmiedt mentions that one of his role models is Rabbi Shlomo Katz, who was born into a family of musicians. Katz is best known for singing the songs and giving over the Torah messages of Rabbi Shlomo Carlebach.

Gaisin says he's confident that the band can make the delicate career-life balance work.

"Each one of us contains a little bit of a tzadik," says Gaisin. "So many people are just on Earth or just in heaven. That is not the Jewish way. You need to bridge the spiritual and physical plains. That's what we're trying to do. That's what we'll keep on doing." ■

PHOTO CREDIT: SHIMMY SOCOL.

Vocalist Shlomo Gaisin sings passionately during a Zusha concert.

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Vitals

Mazal tov

Rebecca Cooke on her bat mitzvah, February 13.
Abigail Ketslakh on her bat mitzvah, February 13.
Alan and Terri Mellow on the birth of their granddaughter, Emma Nora Anker, daughter of Amy and Jeffrey Anker.
Paul and Sari Shifrin on the birth of their grandson, Micah Isaac, son of Jonah Shifrin and Ariel Schwartz.
Rich and Sally Adler on the birth of their grandson, Avi Yehudah, son of Ruth and Danny Jacob.
Scott and Wendy Chaiken on the birth of their grandson, Augustus Chaiken, son of Jon and Lisa Chaiken.
Aaron and Molly Brody on the birth of their son, Noam Eliav Brody.

Condolences

David Adler on the death of his grandfather, Jack Adler.
Nathan Stone on the death of his father, Al Stone, November 13.
Rennie Roth on the death of her mother, Sybil Gertz, November 26.
Odie Elden on the death of her husband, Judge Sandy Elden, December 1.
Susan Weisberg on the death of her mother, Lillian Weisberg, December 4.
Scott Shepard on the death of his mother, Gloria Wayne, December 9.
Howard Weinblatt on the death of his brother, Allan Weinblatt, December 15.
Ruth Taubman on the death of her mother, Lola Taubman, December 21.
Larry Tyner on the death of his mother, Phyllis Tyner, December 22.
Gary Glick on the death of his father, Arthur Glick, December 22.
Robertha W. Cohen on the death of her mother, Ellen Westheimer, January 12.
Rachel Juni on the death of her husband, Elliot, January 19.

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Charley's Aunt by Brandon Thomas — May 12, 13, 14, 15--18, 19, 20, 21
Noises Off by Michael Frayn — Nov 10, 11, 12, 13--16, 17, 18, 19

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My kids were in love with Gan Izzy and are planning to go next year. Swim lessons pushed our daughter towards the local aquatic club (which is awesome!) and Jewish theme of the camp helps them to keep up with our family traditions. We are also very pleased with endless choice of field trips and activities. -- Elana

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